Why does it seem the Federal Government is so quick to cooperate with Mexico to thwart border security?

And why does it allow these illegals more consideration than it does American peace officers?

Gilmer Hernandez is 25 years of age. He is married and has a young child. He makes $21,000 a year being a lawman in rough west Texas.

It is disturbing. This trend is disturbing. Our government is saying to peace officers on the border, don't protect yourself on this border because if you do, you will not get protection from the government. And to the illegals that come in and are caught, the Federal Government is saying to them, fear not. We are from the Federal Government and we are here to help you.

Looks like another case of the Federal Government continuing to swoop in and save the day for the illegals who cross into American land.

The American government needs to gets on the right side, the American side of the border war.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1800

ENERGY AND OIL COMPANY PROFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, last week ExxonMobil, the biggest of Big Oil companies, announced that its profits for 2006 totaled $39.5 billion, the highest annual profits ever recorded for an American corporation.

Now I don't begrudge the right of any company to make profits, and certainly ExxonMobil has done quite a good job of doing so; but while they are out making money, it is our job here in Congress to ask what price we have all paid for those profits. The most obvious price has been the squeeze on working families. When gas prices hit $3 per gallon last summer, it was low- and middle-income families just trying to get to work that took the brunt of the impact and had to readjust tight household budgets.

Are ExxonMobil's profits worth that kind of cost to our society? Is it fair that the world's most profitable corporation gets even more profitable while everyday Americans struggle to get by and provide for their children? Certainly that does seem unfair to me, but maybe the problem is not entirely ExxonMobil's fault—after all, they are just feeding America's fossil fuel habit. As President Bush said last, America is addicted to oil. As long as this addiction persists, Big Oil gets richer and average Americans suffer more.

Despite the President's pronouncement, however, that addiction has gotten worse over the last 6 years, when the Bush administration and the Republican-controlled Congress came up with new and clever ways to hand out goodies for oil and gas companies. That was no way to run an energy policy, and all we wound up with 6 years later is higher gas prices, greater dependence on countries that really don't like us, and the increasing threat of global warming.

That is probably one reason why during last year's elections the American people clearly chose a new direction for America, and the new Democratic majority in the House responded.

During the first 100 hours of this Congress, we repealed massive tax breaks for Big Oil and funneled the money into a fund to promote clean and efficient energy technologies. It will go a long way towards promoting the right kinds of energy sources. It also signaled that Democrats are willing to end outdated policies that do nothing more than worsen our addiction to fossil fuels. And that is certainly not the end of our efforts.

Madam Speaker, our Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, and Majority Leader HOYER are planning new efforts to get the House to focus on energy independence and combating global warming. Energy independence means diversifying our energy sources so that we can free ourselves from the national economic and environmental security concerns of being too dependent on oil, gas and coal. And that means keeping gasoline, electricity and natural gas prices stable to make sure American families aren't jolted by sudden high prices.

It means reducing our oil consumption to the point where our foreign policy isn't being held hostage because we need oil from some of the most unstable or unfriendly places in the world, including Iran and Venezuela. It also means making sharp reductions in greenhouse gas pollution so we can stave off the worst impacts of global warming.

I just want to reemphasize that last point because global warming is one of the most serious challenges we are facing in the 21st century. For a district like mine near the Jersey shore, it means dealing with rising sea levels, more frequent floods, and stronger storms. For the country as a whole, it is a security issue.

The more the Earth warms because of pollution from fossil fuels, the more American families and businesses will have to deal with bigger disasters, more unpredictable weather, and a completely different climate.

The bottom line is that working towards energy independence and fighting global warming are real security questions for the American people. Unfortunately, we have wasted the last 6 years spending more time helping ExxonMobil's bottom line than we have dealing with these serious questions.

So this new Congress means an opportunity to move in a new direction. When it comes to energy independence and global warming, the new direction means actually putting forward solutions that will move us towards a clean, sustainable, secure energy future.

We are going to raise the bar in this Congress. No longer should we be satisfied just to hear sound bites like ''addicted to oil'' and ''serious challenge of climate change'' that we heard in the President's State of the Union address. Now we can have a real dialogue about how to address these issues.

And I would just say, Madam Speaker, ExxonMobil may keep earning record profits, but this Congress, this Democratic majority Congress, has to keep its eyes on doing what is best for American families and for our environment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NATIONAL PARKS FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. I wanted to take a few minutes tonight to congratulate the President on the initiative to boost funding for our national parks. Of all the news stories and the ruckus about Iraq and global warming and our borders and the death of Anna Nicole Smith, whatever bumps it out of the news, it has kind of been lost about a major new initiative for the upcoming centennial of the national parks.

I say ''upcoming'' because it is actually in 2016, but a number of us in the House several years ago introduced a National Park Centennial Act. Congressman BRIAN BAIRD and I, we formed the National Parks Caucus and in the House led the effort where we had, I believe, 67 Members. We, quite frankly, would have had more, but we systematically were trying to make sure that we had both Republicans and Democrats in relatively even numbers to show it was a bipartisan effort. And in the Senate, Senator MCCAIN and Senator FEINSTEIN were the leaders, along with Senator ALEXANDER. They had strong support over in the Senate.

The goal was to try to get rid of not only the backlog in the national parks, but trying to address where our parks were going to head in the next 100 years; that in the national parks one of our challenges has been that we have added homeland security challenges to the national parks because many of the sites that would have the most impact if they were attacked and destroyed are actually in our national parks. Whether it be Independence Hall or the Gateway Arch, for that matter, the Golden Gate Bridge, in addition to the monuments here in Washington, all come under the national parks. That