

the American people from further attack, and we cannot be able to tell the American people we're doing our full job unless we have the tools necessary to do so. And this legislation passed in the House yesterday is a part of making sure that we do have the capacity to protect you.

Our most solemn job is the security of this country. People shouldn't forget there's still an enemy out there that wants to do harm to the United States. And therefore,

a lot of my discussion with the Members of the Senate was to remind them of this solemn responsibility. And so I look forward to you passing good legislation, Senators. Thank you for having me. Appreciate your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:16 a.m. at the U.S. Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to H.R. 6166.

Remarks on Energy in Hoover, Alabama September 28, 2006

You know, the price of gasoline has been dropping, and that's good news for the American consumer, it's good news for the small-business owners, it's good news for the farmers. But it's very important for us to remember that we still have an issue when it comes to dependence on foreign oil. And one way to become less dependent on foreign oil is for us to develop new ways to power our automobiles right here in America.

And so I've come to Hoover, Alabama, to recognize this city for being innovative and progressive and for having a good football team. *[Laughter]* I want to thank Mayor Tony Petelos and the city council for serving and leading. See, what we have just witnessed is a police force that is filling up its vehicles with a fuel called E-85. When you hear somebody talk about fuel E-85, that means 85 percent of the fuel comes from ethanol. And ethanol is produced from corn, and corn is grown right here in the United States of America.

One way to become less dependent on foreign oil is to use American-grown products to power our automobiles. And that's what we just witnessed. So I asked Officer Parker of the Hoover Police Department, I said, "Do you like using E-85?" See, he has a choice, because there are what

we call flex-fuel vehicles. He can either use ethanol-based fuel or regular gasoline. As a matter of fact, there's a lot of cars in the United States that are flex fuel, and some of you probably don't even know you've got a car that's flex fuel. It doesn't cost much money, by the way, to convert a regular automobile, an automobile that uses gasoline, to a flex-fuel car.

So anyway, so I said to Officer Parker, I said, first, I told him thanks for serving. And then I said, "You've got a choice, don't you, between gasoline and E-85?" He said, "I do." I said, "Which one do you pick?" He said, "E-85." I said, "Why?" He said, "Because it's got a little better get up to it." In other words, it works just fine.

And it works just fine for other reasons as well. It works just fine because it helps keep our air clean. It works just fine because it helps address a national security issue. So one of the important policies of governments ought to be to encourage the production and use of ethanol. And there's a Federal role for that. In other words, we provide tax credits. We think it's in our national interest that ethanol penetrate more market—in other words, more people use ethanol.

We're providing research dollars, and one reason you provide research dollars is because it's going to be important for us to use something beyond corn to make ethanol. In other words, corn is good, and so is sugar, but you can imagine, it's going to put a little strain on the corn market after a while if the only raw material we use for ethanol is corn. After all, you've got to feed the cows and feed the hogs and feed people as well as feed automobiles with fuel.

And so the Federal Government has committed to spending a fair amount of your money to research other ways to make ethanol. And one such place where good research is going on is right here in the State of Alabama at Auburn University.

And I just had the honor of meeting a professor who came here from South Africa and is now one of the eminent scholars there at Auburn, who spends his time developing new ways to make ethanol. See, what's happening here in America is, is that we have made it a focused effort of our Government to diversify our fuel, and we're spending your money to do it.

The doc was telling me that one of these days, we could be using switchgrass to be making ethanol. That's pretty good news for people. You know, if that ever becomes a reality, there's going to be a lot of switchgrass growers.

He was talking to me about how they're spending time and money figuring out whether or not we can use wood products to make ethanol. Imagine if we can achieve

a technological breakthrough that enables us to use wood chips. You got a lot of wood here in Alabama. You'll become one of the leading ethanol producers if—when we achieve that breakthrough. And that's good news for America.

I like the idea of a President or a Governor saying, "You know something, there's a lot of corn, and we're less dependent on oil from overseas," or, "We've got some new breakthroughs, which makes us less dependent on oil." And the good news is, this technology also helps us be good stewards of the environment.

And so I want to thank the good folks from Hoover, Alabama, for thinking differently, for being on the leading edge of change. I appreciate the mayor and the city council for thinking about how best to represent your people, and you're making a fine contribution to our country as well.

It's an honor to be here. I'm thrilled to see this E-85 plant operating right here in the State of Alabama. I predict there are more coming, and when more come, this country is going to be better off.

Thanks for having me, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:06 p.m. at the Hoover Public Safety Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Tony Petelos of Hoover, AL; Reggie Parker, officer, Hoover Police Department; and David Bransby, professor of agronomy and soil, Auburn University. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Gubernatorial Candidate Robert R. Riley in Birmingham, Alabama *September 28, 2006*

Thanks for coming. It is a joy to be back in Alabama, and I appreciate your warm welcome. I am proud to stand with one of the Nation's finest Governors and ask

for your help in reelecting Bob Riley as Governor of Alabama.

He deserves to be reelected because he's got a record he can run on. He has made