

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

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

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

CARIBBEAN AMNESTY AND RELIEF ACT

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

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, several weeks ago, I had the opportunity to address this body and talk about my bill, the Caribbean Amnesty and Relief Act, and I would like to speak about it again.

I am very proud to introduce the Caribbean Amnesty and Relief Act, which is legislation to reduce the devastating impact on the Caribbean community caused by the 1996 Immigration Reform bill.

The people of the Caribbean Basin have always been loyal friends of the United States. At the height of the Cold War, the United States looked to the Caribbean nations to fight the infiltration of Cuban-style Communism.

As a result, the Caribbean countries suffered political upheaval, and the people of the Caribbean fled to the United States to escape human rights abuses and economic hardship.

People of the Caribbean have now established roots in the United States, many in my congressional district. Many have married here and many have children that were born in the United States.

The economic structure of the Caribbean is such that it cannot absorb the great number of undocumented people now present in the United States.

Our country, in my opinion, should grant the Caribbean population already in the United States amnesty since they have been here so long and continue to benefit the United States economy.

The Jamaicans, for example, present in the United States, send back to their families 800 million in U.S. dollars per year. The Jamaican economy would be severely strained if that money were to disappear.

In 1997, Congress recognized that the Illegal Immigration Reform and Responsibility Act would result in grave injustices to certain communities, and so we passed the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act but left out Caribbeans. I believe that that was very unfair.

We need to pass legislation which will help the Caribbean community; thus, I am proud to take the lead on the Caribbean Amnesty and Relief Act.

I would like to again tell my colleagues what this would do. This bill

would allow for an adjustment for permanent residents for Caribbean nationals who have lived and worked in the United States prior to September 30, 1996 and have applied for an adjustment of status before April 1, 2002.

This means that Caribbeans who have been in the U.S. prior to September 30, 1996 without proper documentation can receive green cards.

The bill provides for spouses and children of those who have become permanent residents under section (a) to also become permanent residents of the U.S. if they apply before April 1, 2002.

The bill establishes a Visa Fairness Commission, which will study economic and racial profiling by American consulates abroad and customs and immigration inspectors at U.S. points of entry.

The purpose of this section is to determine whether there is discrimination against Caribbeans and others when applying for a visa or upon entering the United States.

In addition, this section would allow for the Secretary of State to waive the visa fee for those who are too poor to pay.

Again, it is imperative that we try to unite families. It is unconscionable that we would have families here in the United States and others in the Caribbean nations who want to be reunited but through loopholes cannot be.

We are also concerned about the arbitrariness of people who are granted green cards and some people who are not able to get green cards. We think that much of this is done in an arbitrary manner.

Madam Speaker, this is important legislation, and I urge the House to give it favorable consideration as soon as possible. We are, after all, dealing with people's lives. I look upon immigration as a good thing for this country. Immigrants built this country. The reason why this country has done so well through the years is because the best and the brightest from all over the world have come to these shores, as my four grandparents did many, many years ago, and have helped to build this country.

What kind of a person emigrates to these shores? It is not a lazy person. It is someone who is willing to put aside all of the customs and cultures, leaving family behind and coming to this country is certainly an industrious, hard-working person who just wants to be given a chance.

That is what the United States has meant to millions and millions and millions of people through the years, for people to just have a chance. It is a win-win situation, because, in terms of helping the families, we are also helping this country.

Again, if we do not do it as this term winds down to an end, I will be reintroducing this in the next Congress, and I hope we can move so that this travesty of families being broken apart can be ended and that we can finally give relief to people who need it, helping

them, helping their families and helping this country as well.

Madam Speaker, I urge this House to give my legislation favorable consideration as soon as possible.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO DELETE CERTAIN REMARKS FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to delete a portion of the remarks of my special order speech given earlier today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

DEVELOPMENT OF ANWR IS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST

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

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today to set the record straight on some very interesting, but very misleading, allegations regarding the development of the coastal plain for our oil, your oil, in the State of Alaska.

Let me make it perfectly clear that nobody cares about the environment more than Alaskans. We have balanced our environment with what the Nation needs.

To give you an example of what we have been able to do with winter drilling, directional drilling, ice roads and pads, this is an oil field, what an oil well looks like in Alaska in the winter-time.

This is the alpine field itself. I want everybody to look at what is on the floor. It is snow. It is ice. It is probably 40 below zero, very, very hard to live there. But after we are all done, this well will produce probably 300 million barrels of oil for you, all of it going to the United States. This is what it looks like when we finish drilling.

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That is the footprint. That is the footprint. It is not much larger than the desk that the Speakers speak from behind here. That is what is left. Anybody saying there is going to be a huge footprint is not looking, not thinking, not being there.

And this is for us. This is Federal oil. And why should we not develop it? When I think of the footprint, I think of Boston or L.A. or Miami, those are really impacts upon the environment. But an even bigger impact upon our environment is our 58 percent dependence upon Saddam Hussein, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Venezuela, Colombia and Yemen. Think about that for a moment. That is a footprint. And by the year 2005, it will be 61 percent, unless we change our ways.

Last year, we imported very nearly a million barrels a day alone from Iraq.

A million barrels a day from Iraq. U.S. purchases from Saddam Hussein are \$39 million each day we send him to build arms, to kill people, to potentially have nuclear war.

Do we want that kind of footprint? In fact, I would like to show a real footprint. Not this one less than the size of this desk, but this one. Do my colleagues recognize this footprint? I would like to refresh our memories. This footprint was Kuwait. Does that look like it is good environment? Is that protecting the atmosphere with all the oil burning? That is the footprint, not what I had in my own footprint.

Let us compare these two right here. I think it is pretty good, that is the footprint of those who are against developing our coastal plain. This footprint, green grass, wildlife, a little tiny thing not much bigger than that desk, or this one right here. That is the real footprint.

Then we have another one. I keep hearing 95 percent of it is open for development. If I could have the next one, 95 percent is open for development. This is what we are talking about. We keep hearing from people on that side of the aisle from Massachusetts, who have never been there by the way, have no concept, wants to have a reserve of oil to heat the homes for the senior people and wants to buy it from the OPEC countries and pay \$34 a barrel, or use it out of the reserve which was set aside for strategic purposes only for military. I was here, he was not. And to have someone to say that this is the way to solve our problem by spending our reserve and then to say that 95 percent of Alaska is open for oil development and coastal plain.

This is closed from all the way here, all the way over to here, it is open here, closed, open and closed. Looking at that, 14 percent is open.

The ironic part about it, people say 95 percent. And I said something time and time again, just because this carpet is blue does not make it the sky. This is carpet. And just because an area might be open, most of it is closed, does not mean there is oil there. And how can this Congress keep saying because of special interest groups, we must not develop the small little coastal plain area less than a million acres? About the size of the Dulles Airport, by the way.

Madam Speaker, I desire to set the record straight on some very interesting, but very misleading allegations regarding the development of the coastal plain of my home State of Alaska. Let me say up front that nobody loves Alaska more than Alaskans and nobody cares more about protecting Alaska than the people who reside in our great state. What Alaskans have found in the more than 20 years of oil and gas development is balance. A way to balance our Nation's need for fossil fuels and our desire to conserve our precious natural resources. Alaskans accomplish this balance with technological advances such as directional drilling where development can tap oil and gas reserves from miles away. Tech-

nology has also reduced the size and impacts of these developments. Our oil and gas facilities on the North Slope have gotten smaller and smaller while becoming cleaner and cleaner. The surface disturbance of these areas is temporary and minimal. Advances such as ice roads and pads leave no impact upon the environment. But don't just take my word for it, let me show you a recent development site utilizing this new technology.

This photo demonstrates the winter oil and gas operations that will deliver oil and gas resources to supply our Nation's demands. Now, let me show you the footprint this development leaves when summer arrives and the ice and snow have melted away. This is how Alaskans develop oil and gas resources in our State, with minimal impact, surface occupancy while maximizing protective measures for the environment. With this successful track record, I hope my colleagues can understand why it is so deeply troubling for me to hear comments from some of my urban colleagues who try to lecture Alaska and Alaskans about environmental impact. When I think of man's impact on the environment, my mind races to big cities, like Boston, with huge expanses of development and air quality issues. Not oil and gas production that services our national demand in an environmentally benign manner.

Some of these same Members also advocate the creation of a Northeast heating oil reserve. While I may concede that there are some superficial merits to this notion, it will do nothing to solve the real problems our country faces regarding a domestic energy policy. While the band aid of a heating oil reserve sounds appealing, it is both unworkable and will rely on foreign imports to maintain the reserve's capacity. To address the heating oil issue, this administration decided to drain the Strategic Petroleum Reserve in an effort to impact heating oil prices. This ill-conceived, political knee-jerk was opposed by both Alan Greenspan and Secretary of the Treasury Summers. In a September memo, they wrote the President that draining the reserve would be a "major and substantial policy mistake." Unfortunately, their forecast was proven true at the expense of taxpayers. We don't need temporary Band-aids to fix our energy problems—we need lasting solutions to the problem of dangerously excessive dependence upon imports. Fifty-eight percent of our Nation's supply is delivered from foreign sources. That is especially shocking when you consider that the United States was only 35 percent reliant during the 1973 oil embargo. And even more worrisome is that more and more oil is being supplied from countries like Iraq. Ten years ago, we went to war in the Persian Gulf to stifle Saddam Hussein. Within the last year, this administration has allowed Iraq to export nearly 1 million barrels per day to the United States. Why? Because this administration's energy policy consists of one principle: When the price of crude gets too high, we ask foreign sources to increase production to drive down price.

Madam Speaker, what kind of energy policy relies on our enemies to supply our Nation's needs? At the same time, this flawed policy provides millions of dollars to be used in a manner which places our global security in jeopardy. At today's prices, the United States reliance on Iraq's production hands Saddam Hussein more than \$33 million per day. That adds up to nearly \$1 billion per month. Thanks

to this administration, Saddam Hussein receives funding that can be used to build weapons of mass destruction and carry forward his anti-U.S. agenda. Not only do these actions put our foreign policy and the national security at risk, they also are fiscally irresponsible and environmentally damaging. Imports of crude oil account for nearly \$100 billion per year of our trade deficits—one-third of the entire trade deficit.

Also, let's not forget what environmental protection looks like in these countries. This is a picture of environmental protection in the less stable foreign nations the United States is dependent upon. The fact is, that a development in Alaska, the size of Dulles Airport, can help address the supply needs of the United States as part of a comprehensive national energy policy with a balance to protect the environment. Like all new Federal actions, it will take the passage of a law to begin the development of the coastal plain. However, the coastal plain was set aside for future development in § 1002 of the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. The first line of this section clearly states the intent, "The purpose of this section is to provide for a comprehensive and continuing inventory and assessment of the fish and wildlife resources of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; an analysis of the impacts of oil and gas exploration, development, and production, and to authorize exploratory activity within the coastal plain in a manner that avoids significant adverse effects on the fish and wildlife and other resources." And President Carter made this intent very clear at the signing ceremony when he said in the opening moments of that ceremony, "This act of Congress reaffirms our commitment to the environment. It strikes a balance between protecting areas of great beauty and value and allowing development of Alaska's vital oil and gas and mineral and timber resources. A hundred percent of the offshore areas and 95 percent of the potentially productive oil and mineral areas will be available for exploration or for drilling."

The intent to develop the portion of the refuge with the greatest potential for oil and mineral development is clear. President Carter made this point at the signing ceremony when he spoke of the offshore areas being completely open to development and the 1002 area being set aside for onshore development. Revisionists feel that the area set aside to provide "vital oil and gas resources" is now the biological heart of the refuge. These environmental extremists clearly have never visited the coastal plain of ANWR to witness how Alaskans have struck a balance between environmental protection and supplying this nation with the vital energy resources. Alaskans conserve the area our oil and gas developments occupy. We have only utilized 14 percent of our arctic coastline for oil and gas development—not the 95 percent some Members have erroneously stated. And we have reduced the temporary footprint these developments create. First generation developments utilized 65 acres. With 30 years of arctic experience, the same development would use less than nine acres. For some fields, directional drilling allows development without any surface occupancy.

Many of the concerns revolve around the caribou that calve upon the coastal plain. As a Member who served in the Congress during the consideration and building of the Trans

Alaska Pipeline, I have heard the allegation that oil and gas development will hurt the caribou that thrive within our State. This argument was made during the building of the 800 mile Trans Alaska Pipeline 20 years ago. It has now been dusted off and used in the debate against developing ANWR. Mr. Speaker, I think the truth about development's impact upon caribou can be easily found by looking at the impact over the past 20 years of the Trans Alaska Pipeline.

When the pipeline was being built the caribou population of the Central Arctic Caribou Herd was at 3,000. Since development, populations have been as high as 23,400. The reason caribou have thrived on the North Slope is because our arctic development has relied on technological advances which actually help create a favorable environment for the wildlife. With directional drilling and ice roads and pads, the oil and gas industry can utilize technology to protect wildlife and the environment.

Madam Speaker, developing the coastal plain of my home State of Alaska to responsible drilling is the right thing to do. This small development will supply this country with vital energy resources while doing no harm to the environment. Utilizing such a small area, as Congress intended, to service our Nation's energy needs is an important part of a comprehensive energy policy and something that can be done with balance to conserve the environment. It is something that the Native Alaskan population that call the coastal plain home want. It is something that a majority of Alaskans want. And oil and gas production from Alaska's coastal plain is something this nation needs.

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

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

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

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

USING THE TAX CODE TO BUILD SCHOOLS IN AMERICA

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, we have had a number of great fiscal debates on this floor. Yesterday we confronted the issue of how to use the Tax Code to help build schools in America. The Democrats had one approach, the Republicans had another. And the bill which was passed yesterday, unfortunately, was a blend of the two.

The Democrat approach makes an awful lot of sense. It builds on the tradition we have in this country that when school districts issue school bonds, the Federal Government gives

them lower interest rates because the interest on those bonds is tax excluded, tax exempt, and accordingly those who buy bonds from school districts agree to lend that money with a low rate of interest.

Building on that, the Democrats have suggested that school districts, in effect, get zero-interest bonds, the chance to issue bonds where the holders of those bonds get no interest at all paid for by the school district, but rather they receive a tax credit from the Federal Government. So instead of subsidizing the interest cost, the Federal Government through the Tax Code would pay the interest costs.

The effect for school districts is to reduce their borrowing costs by one-third. That is to say, instead of repayment costs that might cost a school district \$100,000 a year, they would be making repayment costs of \$66,000 a year. That will allow school bonds to be sold throughout this country and allow us to build and revitalize schools, and that is important for our education.

What the bill we dealt with yesterday does is instead of providing \$25 billion of these special tax credit, no-interest, lowest possible cost bonds to the school districts, providing \$25 billion over a period of 2 years, it provides only \$15 billion of those bonds over a 3-year period. Roughly half of what we Democrats suggested.

Now, in one way it is a little more than half. We wanted 25, they gave us 15. But if we really look at it, it is a little less than half. We wanted \$12.5 billion a year; they are providing \$5 billion a year. And what is also bad is that they have weaseled the Davis-Bacon language so that not only do school districts get less than half of the help they need, but we are going to get substandard schools built at substandard wages in inadequate quantity.

The Republicans, though, did provide another method of helping school districts. It was a new idea and an exciting idea. A terrible idea. An idea which will cost the Federal Government over \$2 billion, but is worse than nothing to the school districts. What they are going to do is relax the arbitrage rules. What that means is they are going to turn to school districts around this country and say, "We know you are going to issue tax exempt bonds, but when you do so, do not use the money to build schools right away. We are going to let you play with the money for 4 years."

So this is a special incentive from the Federal Government to help the school districts. We are going to give them a free ticket to Las Vegas with the bond proceeds. Take the bond proceeds and go gamble them, and that is what Congress wants school districts to do.

Madam Speaker, did we forget what happened to Orange County, California, which went bankrupt just a few years ago? The idea will not help build a school on Elm Street, but it will help build skyscrapers on Wall Street.

The idea that we would encourage school districts to take 4 years, when they did not build schools and instead played with the money, does nothing for education. It will cost the government over \$2 billion.

But I understand where the impetus for this provision comes from, because for many years I practiced tax law. I would emerge from the tax law library after 12 dreary hours of reading fine print regulations and I would say at least my job is exciting compared to those tax lawyers who are subspecialists in tax law for tax exempt bonds. That is the most boring job I can imagine, and I was a tax nerd for many years. I know boring.

The Bond Council want the excitement of the investment bankers. We should not do it. We should build schools now.

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION LEGISLATION NEEDED BEFORE THE END OF 106TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, today I would much rather be on my way back home to the central coast of California in order to spend time with my constituents. Instead, I rise to express my deep concern over an issue that greatly affects them as well as millions of other Americans: Schools in this country and in my communities which are overcrowded and in great disrepair.

In these last few hours in the 106th Congress, I am disappointed that we have not yet passed comprehensive school modernization legislation. But we are still in session and there is still time.

I strongly believe that education is a local issue. But overcrowding is a national crisis which demands a strong national response, not just a token. I have come to stand here on this floor several times on this topic. Recently, I held a letter signed by over 300 students from Peabody Elementary School in Santa Barbara expressing their desire for real, meaningful school construction legislation.

Now, this is a school in Santa Barbara built for 200 students which now houses over 600. These students know how disadvantaged they are when portable classrooms take up precious outdoor space which should be used in the development of their bodies and minds through physical activity. Time and time again, I have visited schools throughout my district which suffer from similar circumstances.

Madam Speaker, there is not a school in the Santa Maria Bonita district whose enrollment is not hugely impacted. One school comes to mind, Oakley, which was built for 480 students and now houses over 800. The high school district in Santa Maria is hoping to pass a bond measure because of the extreme overcrowding.