

give consumers and commuters and truck drivers and Northeast homeowners and farmers any protection against these volatile oil prices.

Now we have got this bill that wants to abolish the Department of Energy right on top of what I think is a significant, positive effort on the part of the administration and Secretary Richardson of getting the OPEC countries, as the gentleman from California just mentioned, and the non-OPEC countries like Venezuela, Mexico, and Norway to increase production by almost 2.8 million barrels per day which will and has brought down already the price at the pump.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I think the point that the gentleman from Michigan is making is a very valid one. The Senate finished consideration of EPCA, the Energy Policy Conservation Act, last September. The Committee on Commerce in the House finished it last September. So it has been sitting somewhere between the House and the Senate languishing for 6 months right through this entire energy crisis. So the issue is why can we not, especially those of us in the Northeast who are very much dependent upon imported oil, know that the President as of midnight tomorrow night still has the authority to deploy the Strategic Petroleum Reserve that is our weapon against OPEC if he deems it to be necessary?

Why would we have allowed that authority to expire tomorrow? We could have passed it out of here this week, to give the President that authority. We deal with nations. These are the heads of governments that make these decisions. There is no free market in oil in the world. It is all done by governments acting as a cartel. If it happened in any industry in the United States, the Antitrust Division of the Justice Department would break it up. It is illegal. So our President has his own oil field, it is the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, to deploy, to use as a weapon, a bargaining tool with these other countries.

That has helped. That has helped a lot in terms of Secretary Richardson's ability to be able to use that as part of the leverage and getting the highest possible number of barrels as a concession from OPEC over the last couple of weeks. The President is saying, "I won't deploy the Strategic Petroleum Reserve if you give us a million, a million and a half, two million barrels of oil a day." As of tomorrow night, the President's authority to use this expires and all we are asking is when on the schedule will that bill be brought up so that we can give back to the President this leverage he needs in any negotiations with OPEC?

1445

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, let me just comment briefly, and I think the gentleman from Massachusetts will understand that last year, September 30, 1999, we passed and sent to the President our Energy Conservation Policy Act. It was on the day that it expired. So we, with great alacrity and interest, submitted it to the President; and I think the gentleman from Massachusetts realized what the President did, he did not sign it. In fact, he waited 5 days.

So the fact that this expires is not a major crisis, and I think he realizes that from the President himself not signing it when we gave it to him last year.

To answer the gentleman from Michigan as to the point about the Department of Energy, the Department of Energy had nothing to do with the cost per gallon of energy either going from 72 under the Carter administration, the Democrat administration, down to 25 and lower; and now it is going up, notwithstanding the fact we give billions and billions and billions of dollars every day. Even the Secretary of Energy, Mr. Richardson, said we were caught napping.

So after sending billions and billions of dollars year in and year out to this Department of Energy, there are people in Congress, including myself, who felt that perhaps this agency should be reformed. It is an institution that should be changed. It is an institution that is not meeting the demands. I think Secretary Richardson would probably agree today, since he admits that "we were caught napping" after all of this money we spent. I think most people in the House agree that the Department of Energy needs to be restructured.

So that is my comment. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comment. I would just say in response to his last comment, though, that I am glad the gentleman now on his side is moving away from the question of abolishing the Department of Energy, because as the gentleman knows, the act that I referred to, that I cited, is called the Department of Energy Abolishment Act. The gentleman says he just wants to reform it now. So it is good to see there is some movement away from abolishing the department, which has, among other things under its jurisdiction, oil conservation programs, research and renewable energy conservation and research programs; and I could just go on and on and on, and I will with the help of my friend from Massachusetts.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY).

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I again thank the gentleman for yielding.

I think people have to understand that part of the Contract with America is the pledge to abolish the Department

of Energy. So the Department of Energy, in 1995, 1996, 1997, they were just fighting to exist, not to put together an energy policy that would make us independent of OPEC. Here we sit on the day before the President's authority expires, and we still have not produced a bill out here that we can vote on that can give him that authority to continue to keep that leverage strong against OPEC.

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlemen for both of their comments, but I would not want the House to be left with the impression that somehow it is the House that conducts diplomatic efforts; it is the House that is involved in negotiating with oil ministers; that it is the House that has the discretion through Executive Order to release all or any part of the Strategic Petroleum Oil Reserve.

Let us see if we cannot work together in a bipartisan fashion to actually come to a solution on this reauthorization; and hopefully, jointly, we can keep the pressure on the administration to continue to use more diplomatic efforts to increase production, because in the end, I think that is the best solution for American consumers and for businesses.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I think due to the spirit in which that was given we accept that, and we thank the gentleman for his constructive comments; and we look forward to working with him in the weeks ahead.

ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 1776, AMERICAN HOMEOWNERSHIP AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2000

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon a Dear Colleague letter was sent to all colleagues informing them that the Committee on Rules is expected to meet the week of April 3 to grant a rule which may restrict amendments for consideration of H.R. 1776, the American Homeownership and Economic Opportunity Act of 2000.

Any Member contemplating an amendment to H.R. 1776 should submit 55 copies of the amendment and one copy of a brief explanation to the Committee on Rules no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4. The Committee on Rules office is located upstairs in H-312, as the presiding officer knows very well, here in the Capitol.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are properly drafted and should check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain that their amendments comply with the Rules of the House.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 701

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 701.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, APRIL 3, 2000

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 701

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name withdrawn as a cosponsor of H.R. 701.

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

There was no objection.

REAPPOINTMENT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER IN THE LI- BRARY OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, pursuant to section 4(b) of Public Law 94-201 (20 U.S.C. 2103(b)), and upon the recommendation of the minority leader, the Chair announces the Speaker's reappointment of the following individual from private life to the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress on the part of the House:

Mr. William L. Kinney of South Carolina.

There was no objection.

BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER TREATMENT ACT

(Mrs. MYRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I urge the leadership to schedule a vote on

the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act on the suspension calendar before Mother's Day. This legislation is really vital to provide treatment for low-income, uninsured working women who are diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer. Giving States the option of providing Medicaid coverage for these women if they are screened by the CDC's early detection program and found to have cancer will help save thousands of lives.

The program currently provides screening for the cancer, but it provides no treatment options, no funding for treatment options for these women. So they have no option to be cured of their cancer, which is a harsh reality. I am currently undergoing treatment for breast cancer, but I am very fortunate because I have insurance.

The funding for this bill was included in the budget resolution that we passed in the House last week and so there really is no reason not to have it passed on the floor by Mother's Day.

INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTION: BRING OUR CHILDREN HOME

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell the story of Jeff and Ludwig Koons, a father and his son who have been forced apart because of a country's refusal to abide by the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

Jeff Koons' son, Ludwig M. Koons, was born in New York and was abducted from the family residence to Rome by his mother. Mr. Koons was awarded custody in the United States, but the Italian courts refused to accept any American jurisdiction. Mr. Koons won custody in Italy, but the ruling was overturned.

Two investigations were started internally within Europe and within Italy, but they were abruptly stopped when the Italian Supreme Court awarded his ex-wife custody, therefore covering up the tremendous injustices done to Mr. Koons and his son. Their ruling was based on the amount of time Ludwig had been kept in Italy since his abduction. Jeff has been allowed only strictly supervised visitation in Italy.

Mr. Speaker, this 1 minute is not just about Jeff and his son, Ludwig. It is about the 10,000 American children who have been abducted to foreign countries. These children, and the parents they were taken from, are suffering. This House must work together to solve this problem and bring our children home where they belong.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK GIARRIZZO

(Mr. MANZULLO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor of the House today to

commend the extraordinary work of Frank Giarrizzo in his efforts to alleviate hunger in Africa.

Ten years ago, Frank served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Malawi. Frank witnessed firsthand the despair brought on by the "hungry season." This is the time when the people run out of the food they have grown, and do not have the money to buy anything until their next crop is ready.

Rather than succumb to the hopelessness of the situation, Frank used it as motivation to solve the problem. He established a program in Malawi known as VEZA, or Village Enterprise Zone Associations. This nongovernment organization works in conjunction with local member associations to help farmers increase production. He helps erect silos in which locally grown grain will be stored until there is a food shortage, such as in the hungry season. The money received for the grain will help to refill the silos after the next harvest. These and other initiatives are all a part of VEZA's aim to alleviate hunger.

It is important to understand that thousands of people in Malawi are alive today thanks to Frank's determination. It is a living example of how one person can truly make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I want to thank Frank Giarrizzo for his selfless efforts to improve the lives of others.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time previously allotted to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

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

There was no objection.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPACE RESEARCH TO OUR COUNTRY

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like this afternoon to talk about NASA and the recent report regarding the Mars program, as well as a