

are not relying on foreign sources and that we will have national security and not have to worry about when the next shipment of oil or gas or coal or ethanol or whatever it may happen to be.

So by being able to develop these policies and working with the administration and the Secretary of Energy and the work that has gone on to try to help stabilize the market, which I believe they have gone to great measures to do, along with this legislation, we are going to begin to make sure that what we have gone through in the past does not happen again.

I tell people that the original one was a bad movie and the sequels have not been any better since and, hopefully, we never have to witness this particular situation again in the future.

I would like to thank the chairman and the people who were involved and look forward to advancing this legislation.

Mr. BOUCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. WEYGAND).

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BOUCHER) for yielding me the time, as well as our colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON), for allowing us to move forward on this bill.

The Northeast has traditionally been a geographically hard location for much transportation of resources, like home heating oil and gasoline. We also have a very older style of architecture which often causes us to have very inefficient buildings and, unfortunately, that leak during the wintertime of heat and resources and energy. We also have a much colder environment in the Northeast than most parts of the country. All these factors lead to us as being big consumers of home heating oil.

Unfortunately, also over the years we have reduced the amount of inventory that we have traditionally had the capability of keeping in the Northeast. In 1991 we had about 4 million barrels of home heating oil on reserve in the Northeast. Since the Gulf War, we have traditionally built it up, to last year we had about 17 million barrels on hand. But this year we dropped to almost an all-time low back down to about 4.5 million barrels.

Inventory is an important part of making sure that the Northeast has an adequate supply to provide for home heating oil. This bill will go a long way to improving the inventory. I compliment the members from the majority side for bringing this bill forward that we have been working so hard on.

We must recognize, though, that only 2 million barrels is hardly a drop in the bucket to what we really need. I would hope that as we move this bill through conference that they would look at increasing the home heating oil reserve to in the neighborhood of 3 or 4 million barrels versus the 2 million barrels that is proposed.

We also must do other things, though. We have to look at alternative

sources of energy such as natural gas, such as making sure we have solar power. We must also provide the kinds of tax incentives we need for conservation. That is for better winterization programs, for building materials and other things that will help enhance and reduce the amount of energy loss that we have in our buildings. All of these elements taken in composite will make us a more efficient user of energy, such as petroleum products.

I hope that as we begin to move forward with this session and as we wrap up before this fall, we will truly have a number of tax incentives for winterization and conservation, alternative sources of energy, as well as improving our stocks of inventory, as we are under this bill.

I thank both the majority and minority for bringing this bill forward. I also want to compliment my colleagues who have been working so hard on this, particularly the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO), and of course, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. BALDACCIO).

We have all been working hard because our constituents hurt very hard this winter. We saw prices in Rhode Island go from 99 cents a gallon to over \$2.05 a gallon in a matter of weeks. This will help reverse that trend, and this will be better for the constituents of the Northeast. And I thank my colleagues for that.

Mr. BOUCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS).

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Chairman BARTON), the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BOUCHER) the ranking member, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the gentleman from Maine (Mr. BALDACCIO), the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. WEYGAND), and I also want to thank the President and Secretary Richardson for their support of the consent of a Northeast home heating oil reserve.

Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that this winter the people in the Northeast were hit very, very hard by the large increase in home heating oil prices; and many of the folks in the State of Vermont in the Northeast were having a very, very difficult time paying a doubling of the price of home heating oil from just 1 year before. It was a serious crisis. It remains a crisis. And it is no secret that we were not prepared for it.

On February 4, I introduced H.R. 3608, the Home Heating Oil Price Stability Act; and in this short period of time since then, we now have 98 cosponsors, including 24 Republicans and 27 Representatives who are not from the Northeast. So this is a bipartisan piece of legislation. It is a national piece of legislation.

The bottom line is that we were caught unprepared, and the bottom line is that we have got not to be caught unprepared again. A home heating oil reserve of at least 2 million barrels, and that is the legislation included within this bill, would make certain that when the weather becomes very cold, when home heating oil prices zoom up, we will have something to call upon to control the escalating price of home heating oil. And that is what the reserve does. So I think this is a significant step forward in controlling escalating home heating oil prices.

I would hope, as previous speakers have indicated, that we could expand the concept. Two million barrels in the Northeast is a good start. The original legislation calls for another 4.7 million barrels in the Gulf Coast, which is part of what the Strategic Petroleum Reserve is.

My understanding is that the President has the authority, in fact, to do that on his own; and I hope that he will.

The bottom line is that this is a significant step forward in preventing another spike in home heating oil in the Northeast. It will save substantial sums of money for the people in the Northeast and, in fact, for people throughout this country.

I very much thank the chairman and the ranking member and those who have made this legislation possible.

Mr. BOUCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, I use this time to commend my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON), the chairman of our energy subcommittee, for his excellent work on this measure. The procedural difficulties that I referenced earlier were not of his doing. I know that, given his way, we would have had a different process and one that I think would have been somewhat more thorough.

I urge my colleagues to approve this measure. It will reauthorize the authority of the President to manage the SPR. That is fundamentally important. I would encourage all Members to support the legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). All time has expired.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2884, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO NATIONAL SKILL STANDARDS BOARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, pursuant to Section 503(b)(3)

of the National Skill Standards Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. 5933), and upon the recommendation of the majority leader, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following member on the part of the House to the National Skill Standards Board for a 4-year term to fill the existing vacancy thereon:

Mr. William L. Lepley, Hershey, Pennsylvania.

There was no objection.

SO LONG TO SYLVAN RODRIGUEZ, ONE OF HOUSTON'S NATIVE SONS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, first let me offer my deepest concern and sympathy for the Marines who lost their lives on behalf of this Nation, and to a native son from Houston and his family.

This morning, Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute and acknowledge Sylvan Rodriguez, a "minister of information," a local news anchor for Channel 11 news in Houston, Texas, who passed away last week. Sylvan Rodriguez was an anchor for 23 years, but what we know him most for, those of us who watched him in the community, is as a caring deliverer of the news, someone who believed that the news should be informational but passionate and compassionate.

He died from cancer. The viewers of Channel 11 will miss him and the Houston Community will miss him.

Rodriguez was born in San Antonio, Texas, on March 20, 1948. He came to Houston in 1977. He went to Los Angeles but returned to our Houston family in 1987. He anchored the noon and 6:00 p.m. newscast. He reported on major issues in our community.

He was a founding member of the I Have a Dream Foundation, but most importantly, Mr. Speaker, he loved his family and his community. I salute him and my regrets and sympathy go to his wife; his two daughters; his son; his stepson; and as well his stepdaughter; his mother and three brothers and sister in Louisiana.

Mr. Speaker, we have lost a valued leader, a member of the Houston Community who will be remembered as much for how much he cared for people as for his professional approval to delivering the news to us. Sylvan Rodriguez through his work was a friend to us all, he will be missed by our entire city.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the life of Mr. Sylvan Rodriguez, distinguished Houston news anchor, journalist and community activist. Mr. Rodriguez recently passed away after a bout with cancer.

Since the shattering news of his illness, Sylvan showed determination and courage. Instead of turning inward when this disease was diagnosed, Sylvan realized that he could play a special role in educating the community about cancer, its devastation, and one's ability to survive. Sylvan continued to educate the Houston Community about cancer and tire-

lessly raised funds for numerous charities while still fighting this horrific disease.

More than one of Houston's most beloved news anchor and journalist; Sylvan was a leader in the community and dedicated his life's work to making this world a better place than the way he found it. Sylvan was a very special person and meant a lot to all who knew him. He loved people and he made us better because he educated and challenged us!

At this time, I do not think Sylvan would have wanted the Houston communities to anguish over his passing; instead, he would want all of us to pick up the torch of leadership and responsibility, and work together to ensure that our communities continue to grow and learn from one another, and to continue God's work.

Nevertheless, Sylvan's passing will forever leave a void in all of our hearts in Houston, and throughout the great state of Texas. I hope that in time, his family, friends, and colleagues are comforted by the legacy of accomplishments Sylvan leaves behind. In addition, I hope that fond memories of Sylvan Rodriguez will continue to inspire all who knew him and the Houston community for the future. In closing, I offer my deepest sympathy on Sylvan Rodriguez passing and bid him a fond farewell.

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 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.)

□ 1800

MICROSOFT BREAK-UP

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

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, we are a Nation of laws. Without a codified, uniform, and fairly administered systems of laws, American society would be harmed, lives would be ruined and businesses would falter and fail.

I also know that our system is not perfect. Sometimes it is possible for existing laws to be misapplied or misinterpreted. Sometimes it is possible for reasonable men and women to look at the same set of facts and to simply draw different conclusions. And sometimes our very human and very American desire to side with the little guy overwhelms our objectivity and colors our view of the facts; that I believe is happening in the case of Microsoft versus the Department of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that Microsoft is being unfairly judged, not only in

the federal courtroom, but also in the court of public opinion, and I believe this good company stands a chance of being unfairly punished. That is why I am here today to do what I can to stop an injustice from occurring.

Microsoft is the great American success story. Today, it is a company whose products have increased the efficiency of our work force immeasurably. It is a company whose products are used and respected worldwide. It is a company who has shared more of its wealth creation with its workers than any other business in this country. It is a company whose founder has made more charitable contributions than any other business leader in the entire world.

And this American success story is under attack today, because it wanted to offer better products to its customers in order to stay competitive. That seems absurd to me. Even more absurd is the precedent that this decision would set for all of American business, because the attack on Microsoft is not simply an attack on a single very successful company.

It is an attack on the very principles of business competition and technological innovation. It is an attack that threatens to undermine one of the most successful engines of economic growth and technological innovation in our Nation.

One of the first rules of business is to anticipate changing markets, to predict what competitors will do, and try to do better. The way to win in a competitive marketplace is to produce better products more quickly and more economically. That is the basis of our free enterprise system. It is why our economy leads the world, and it is why we are the envy of the rest of the world.

It is a terribly, terribly serious matter for the government to intrude in that process of healthy competition. And it is simply not acceptable or reasonable for our government to seek to destroy a fundamental engine of our economy.

Microsoft is a generous and responsible corporate citizen, one of the most innovative and creative success stories in American history. Microsoft should not be attacked simply because they sought to provide more integrated, advanced, and efficient products to the marketplace, that is what consumers want companies to do. Far from harming consumers, that is what consumers want from products that and the companies that make them.

The theory behind antitrust actions is to prevent monopolistic or anti-competitive practices that could stifle development or competition and thereby hurt the consumer.

I understand that principle, but the key phrase is thereby hurt the consumer. And what is most important to consider here is not whether there is a specific level of competition, but whether consumers have, in fact, been harmed.