

But we cannot stop there. We need a balanced, proactive national energy policy—one that serves as an energy plan for the future that not only increases energy production, but also decreases energy demand. We must work to decrease our dependence on foreign oil through conservation, renewable energy, and energy efficiency programs.

In the short term, we should look at ways to guard our consumers against potential price gouging by the big oil companies. For our home heating oil consumers, we should also look at incentives to encourage consumers to make energy efficient improvements to their homes, and we must make sure that we fully fund the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The money we invest in this program will be put right back into the economy through lower heating and fuel bills.

In May, President Bush announced his Administration's plan to address our nation's current energy crisis, a plan for that calls for major increases in oil and gas production in the United States. I agree with the Administration that we need to increase production, but I believe their proposal is a plan for the past that seems to cater to the big oil companies.

I am disappointed that their plan does not do more to support programs to increase research and development in new energy technologies that increase conservation and alternative and renewable fuel sources to reduce our oil dependence. This may not be an immediate answer, but it is certainly important for the long-term as fossil fuel sources diminish. Surely, if we can create the technology to send a man to the moon, we can develop a crop that our farmers can grow that can provide an efficient and affordable alternative source for fuel.

Our current energy situation is a complicated problem with no easy answers, but it is of critical importance to the people of south Arkansas and across America. The sooner we take action, the sooner we can see results at the pump. I urge my colleagues to support a balanced, proactive, and bipartisan solution to this crisis so that we can bring relief to our hard working families.

A TRIBUTE TO FIREFIGHTER JOHN J. DOWNING

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

Mr. GRUCCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to express my deepest sympathies and that of a grateful community to the Downing family and to pay honor and tribute to a true American hero, firefighter John J. Downing of Port Jefferson Station, New York.

On June 17, 2001, John Downing and 350 of his fellow firefighters and numerous police officers responded to a 2:19 p.m. call to a 911 that sent them to Long Island General Supply Company in Queens, New York. As is always the case, these brave men and women responded without reservation and with little or no regard for their personal safety. By 3 p.m., the blaze had gone to 5 alarms, and the fire and explosion had turned the 128-year-old Long Island

General Supply Company into a horrific scene.

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By 8 p.m. the fire had been controlled, but at a tragic cost: three firefighters lost their lives. Additionally, two civilians and dozens of firefighters were injured.

The three brave men were firefighters John J. Downing of Port Jefferson Station, from Ladder Company 163; Harry Ford, of Long Beach; and Brian Fahey of East Rockaway, both of Rescue 4 unit.

My constituent, John Downing, leaves his wife of 11 years; a daughter, Joanne; and a son, Michael. John Downing was one of seven children from Woodside. He went to elementary school at St. Sebastian School in Woodside, and then to high school in St. Francis Preparatory School in Fresh Meadows. He later went on to work in the construction field before becoming a firefighter 11 years ago.

John Downing and all three of his brothers gave back to the community through public service. He and his brother Denis both became firefighters, Denis Downing now at Ladder Company 160 in Long Island City, and James and Joseph Downing are New York City police officers.

Everyone who knew John called him a hero in every sense of the word. Every day he was on the job for the past 11 years as a firefighter. John always gave his all and did his best. Whether it was in fighting fires or helping young firefighters to learn their job better, everyone in the firehouse knew they could count on John.

Knowing this, it was no surprise when firefighter Downing appeared on the front pages of the New York Daily News 3 years ago. He was pictured on the front page as a hero once again, rescuing passengers from a commercial jet that had gone off the runway at LaGuardia Airport and into the chilling waters of Flushing Bay.

Firefighting was not John's entire life, though. He was a family man, dotting over his two children and devoted to his wife. In recent weeks he had been working a second job to bring his family on their first real summer vacation to Ireland, to visit the relatives of his family and his wife's. Sadly, when the alarm for his last fire came, John was 2 hours away from ending his shift and beginning that vacation.

As the alarm went off, John put down the study book he had been reading, preparing to take the exam to become a lieutenant in the fire department. He grabbed his gear, and with the last full measure of devotion and commitment, John and his colleagues answered their last call.

Today John and his colleagues are in the loving embrace of God. I ask my colleagues to please join me in extending our deepest sympathies to the families of these three brave heroes and in recognizing the brave sacrifices of a true hero, John J. Downing.

CHANGE IN ENERGY REGULATION POLICY BY THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION COINCIDES WITH SWITCH IN CONTROL OF U.S. SENATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, 6 months ago the staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission found that the prices being charged for power in the western United States were neither just nor reasonable. The law would require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to then take action to both lower the prices and to order rebates for market manipulation, price-gouging, price-fixing that was going on.

But under the leadership of Mr. Hebert, chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, appointed by President Bush, FERC did nothing. They said there was not really a problem, this was just the market sending us a signal. What was the signal? Billions of dollars extracted from ratepayers, residential ratepayers, small business and big businesses alike; rolling blackouts and brownouts in California; incredibly high wholesale prices in the Pacific Northwest, with prices up to one hundred times, one hundred times what was charged just 2 years ago in the wholesale market.

But it also meant up to 1,000 percent, a 1,000 percent increase in profits for a handful of energy companies, most of whom happened to be based in Texas, and most of whom happened to be very generous contributors both to this administration and to the majority party in this House.

Mr. Hebert said no action was necessary, that he would do nothing. At one meeting, he opined that he would pray for us; faith-based regulation, I guess. But something changed all of a sudden; being stonewalled for months and months; his own staff saying the law was being violated; being sued; being petitioned by Members of Congress, by constituents, businesses desperate for relief.

On Monday they held an emergency meeting. What changed? What could have brought that about? Did they finally read their own staff reports, finally recognize the market manipulation? No, what changed is one vote in the United States Senate. Suddenly, there were committees in the Senate with the capability of investigating what was going on, and they scheduled hearings for tomorrow to bring in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to have the chairman explain how it is his staff found things to be unjust and unreasonable, but he said that there was no problem.

Under that threat, they have adopted some half measures; better than nothing, but not much. They are going to peg prices to the least efficient, the most expensive unit, most obsolete

generating unit operating. It is better than what has been going on today, with prices up to \$4,000 a megawatt hour. Maybe we will get it down to \$200 or \$300. That is still ten times what the market provided for just 2 years ago.

They will extend it across the entire western United States, which will offer some relief to my part of the country in the Pacific Northwest.

They did admit the price-gouging and market manipulation had gone on and that refunds were due, but they set up some sort of voluntary settlement process to try and extract the billions of dollars back from these Texas-based energy conglomerates.

That is not going to work. They need to use their authority to order the refunds, and they need to set the amount of the refunds.

Then, finally, they said it would only last through a year from next October; that is, two summers for California, two peak seasons, but only one peak season for my part of the country. This will still cost consumers hundreds of millions, ultimately billions of dollars more than they need to pay to have reliable energy in the western U.S. It will still put untold hundreds of millions and billions of dollars into the pockets of market manipulators. It is just that the profits will not be a 1,000 percent increase anymore, it might only be a 200 percent increase or 300 percent increase for those companies based in Texas who have been contributing so generously to the majority party in this administration.

But they had to do something, because they might lose their whole scam, their whole game. The heart of it is deregulation. Deregulation does not work in a monopoly environment. It does not work when there are a few plants and one big set of transmission wires that runs down to smaller wires that run to our house.

How are we going to have competition? Competition could never work, will never work in this industry. It is a vital public necessity. For more than 60 years we regulated in this country because of the collapse the last time we played with deregulation in the United States, back in the 1920s.

It is time to return to regulation. But short of that, it is time for effective cost-based caps on power, something that runs for 2 years and something that orders that rebates be done. We should not accept in this House these half-measures by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in their desperate attempt to save themselves from being embarrassed in having to testify before the United States Senate.

ANGOLA, INDIANA PROVIDES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES TO CITIZENS, AND SUCCESSFUL HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR YEAR EXPERIENCE TO A DIVERSITY OF STUDENTS

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

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, Angola is a town in my district of 67,000 people in northeast Indiana, and it has become a hot zone for economic development, and will become ever more so in the upcoming years.

Obviously, a hard-working work force is important, but that has been there since the founding. Interstate 80/90, better known as the Indiana Toll Road, and Interstate 69 intersect just north of town, which has been a longtime asset of this area.

Angola, Indiana has further capitalized on its natural resource assets. Lake James and many other lakes in the area have long been a draw for many people who want to live in an environment where they can be surrounded by lakes and various recreation opportunities.

By connecting Pokagon State Park to the newly-built YMCA and to its unique Monument Circle with a bike path, area residents are offered increasing health and recreation alternatives.

What has given Angola a further edge is the educational collaboration of Tri-State University, Angola High School, and now the new Plastics Technology Center. Yesterday I was with Steve Corona of JobWorks, Inc., and Craig Adolph and Harry Adamson of the plastics center to announce a grant of \$514,000.

To some, this may seem like the rich are getting richer. Angola has a lot of advantages. The truth is, Angola is not a wealthy town. It is basically mid-America or maybe even slightly below in income, but they are organized. They have been rising because they have been able to coordinate several things that in fact have become the keys to economic development: the recreation opportunities, the lifestyle opportunities, combined with good transportation, a good work force, and increasingly, a well-trained and educated work force.

One of the things that Angola provides is a continuum of education efforts. Whether the student decides to go into the work force directly after high school, enter a 2-year vocational program or community college program, or whether they are going to attend a 4-year university or just continue life-long learning or specific training that is not degree-driven, it is a real-world option.

To employers, this means that students are being prepared for real-world jobs. Too often, our education is generic. Many job training programs at times seem to be marginally useful. It is easy to criticize our schools when they get things wrong, and we frequently do it from this floor.

At Angola High School, they are getting things right. I visited their effective Safe and Drug-Free Schools program. As chairman of the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources, it has been frustrating to see a lot of programs that do not work. This is one that has worked.

They have a great high-tech program which is innovative at the State and national level. They consistently win the State music programs over the last few years. I am proud that it is in my district, but let me give the Members a couple of examples that illustrate why and what I mean by this.

The principal was quoted in this article, and the article reiterates that the U.S. Department of Education has singled out Angola as the "new American high school," and the principal is one of only two high school principals on the National Commission on the High School Senior Year national study. The Indiana Association of Teacher Educators in 1998 and 1996 picked Angola as Indiana's most outstanding high school.

One of the things they have done for the high school seniors is a workplace participation program. About 40 businesses and industries in Steuben County have developed a 9-week workplace curriculum. The high school's flexible four-block schedule allows students time to travel by bus to their workplaces.

Let me give a couple of examples. One student at Angola, Todd Hack, is further along in his college career than some college freshmen. He will start at Tri-State University with 26 hours of credits earned from advanced placement courses and computer classes he took on campus. The flexible schedule allowed him to move ahead, so he was able to stay in school and, because he was an advanced student, get a college education.

Another student, Greg Knauer, worked 30 hours a week in his senior year at a construction firm earning hours towards his journeyman's license. He hopes to begin an apprenticeship after graduation, another type of career path.

Yet another student, Amy Dennis, was interested in nursing, but did not have a family member to show her the ropes. Her workplace participation took her to Cameron Memorial Community Hospital, where she followed every clinical rotation. She will study nursing at Indiana University-Purdue University in Fort Wayne, or IPFW or the University of St. Francis next fall, and hopes to become an obstetrics nurse.

Yet another student will participate in a Cisco computer program in which two high schools in my district have hooked up, and when finished, he will be certified to build up a network system from ground up. He is planning to attend Cornell or MIT, his early picks, and he is confident his high school record, near perfect SAT scores, will make them take notice.