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AMERICA IS A NATION IN NEED OF ENERGY SOLUTIONS

(Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, it is a widely known fact that America is a Nation in need of energy solutions. We have all heard the statistics. Over the next 20 years, U.S. oil consumption is expected to increase by over 30 percent, natural gas consumption by more than 50 percent, and electricity usage will grow by an estimated 45 percent.

Yet these facts are not new. This problem did not drop out of the sky one day. These statistics have been known for years, yet the Clinton administration failed to plan for the future. Now America faces a great energy challenge that can only be met through increased production and conservation.

California's policy of strict conservation without production has not worked. Despite growing energy consumption, not one major power plant was added in the 1990s. Unfortunately, the people of California are suffering because of it.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush has put forth plans emphasizing conservation while meeting production needs. We cannot look away like past administrations have, hoping that the problem will just go away, because it will not.

CALIFORNIA AND THE WEST COAST ELECTRICITY MARKET HAS BEEN ILLEGALLY MANIPULATED

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, evidence continues to mount that California and the west coast electricity market has been illegally manipulated, and consumers are entitled to billions of dollars for illegal overcharges since last summer.

We just heard about the need for production. Let me tell my colleagues what is happening to plants in California. Last week in sworn testimony to the State senate, three employees of the Duke energy plant in my district in Chula Vista, California, testified that they took the plant out of production for economic reasons. That is to boost the price of electricity at times, including the worst emergencies that were declared in California. At stage 3 alerts, the generators were taken down. They were told to throw away spare parts, so it would take longer to correct any problems that did appear. The manipulation of the market is clear. The illegal manipulation of the market is clear.

Mr. Speaker, all my colleagues should sign the discharge petition at the well this morning to make sure

that we get a vote on restoring unanimity to the electrical markets of California, and consumers get refunds for illegal prices.

PRICE CAPS ARE A BAD IDEA

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, even though they violate every principle of free market economics, every principle of common sense, even though they would not produce one drop of oil or one watt of electricity, some Members keep calling for price caps.

Many of us have been trying to explain to the government-has-all-of-the-answers crowd why price caps are a bad idea. But, Mr. Speaker, some Members would rather score political points by claiming to have an easy answer, even though they will really be harming the consumers they pretend to be defending.

The Department of Energy released a study that showed that price controls would cause the California blackouts to get worse. There is no easy fix to this energy crunch, and we should not trust anyone who tells us there is. Only through boosting production and greater conservation will we have more supply and lower prices. There is no other way.

PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS WILL NOT GENERATE LAWSUITS

(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, it is interesting to hear this controversy being expressed as we cannot do this and we cannot do that. Although I am here to talk about the Patients' Bill of Rights, I believe that the industry recognizes that something must be done to help Americans with the energy crisis, and I believe cooler heads would welcome the opportunity to put a moratorium on pricing.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the misrepresentation of the Patients' Bill of Rights by its opponents, and I want to say there is no evidence that the insured will sue employers recklessly. There is no evidence that there will be frivolous lawsuits by those who are insured. I know because I come from the State of Texas that has had a Patients' Bill of Rights for almost 5 years.

There is evidence that the Patients' Bill of Rights, the Ganske-Dingell bill, will provide every American the right to choose their own doctors and restore the patient and physician relationship, that it will cover all Americans with employer-based health care insurance, that it features all external reviews of medical decisions conducted by independent and qualified physicians and not HMO bureaucrats, that it will hold

HMOs accountable. That is the evidence. We need to pass a real Patients' Bill of Rights.

RULE OF LAW PROHIBITS HARVESTING OF STEM CELLS FROM HUMAN EMBRYOS

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a strong advocate of the rule of law and the right to life. That is why I urge the administration to faithfully execute the 1996 law adopted by this Congress prohibiting the use of taxpayer dollars to finance the harvesting of stem cells from human embryos. Just because the last administration tried to trample this law through regulations is no excuse for this administration to fail in its oath to faithfully execute the laws adopted in this Congress. The clear language of the 1996 law, the high principle of the sanctity of human life and the enormous promise of adult stem cell research all argue that this President and this administration should choose life.

PUT MEDICAL DECISIONS BACK IN THE HANDS OF DOCTORS AND PATIENTS

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, let us put medical decisions back in the hands of doctors and patients and ahead of special interests and their slick TV commercials. Let us pass a strong Patients' Bill of Rights.

In my home State of Minnesota, I worked very hard, and in Minnesota, like many other States, we have strong patient protection laws. Those who are covered under Minnesota law have access to specialists when they need them. Every American deserves that right. No one should have to jump through hoops or swim a sea of red tape to get the doctor they need when they need to see one. A patient's doctor knows when they need to see a specialist, and Americans should not have to wait for approval by some profit-driven bureaucrats.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bipartisan Ganske-Dingell bill. It is time for sound, responsible managed care reforms and meaningful patient protection.

THE RIGHT APPROACH TO ENERGY

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, today Californians are experiencing rolling blackouts, rising energy costs and out-of-control gasoline prices. I fear that

this will happen in the other States if we are not careful. The solution to our current energy crisis is simple, choice and competition, not more regulation and price controls like the discharge petition that the Democrats are talking about.

Governor Davis, with the support of environmentalists and government control advocates, raised barriers and actively sought to prohibit the construction of new power plants. Now the Democrats in Washington want to make the Gray Davis approach to energy the national approach to our energy here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear what the results will be if they achieve their goal. What is happening in California will happen in the rest of the country. Blackouts will roll from California all of the way to the eastern seaboard. From family to farmer, all Americans will be affected. We do not want this to happen.

We need to have choice and competition. Let there not be a reoccurrence. Let us take the right approach to energy, and work to increase production, reduce regulation and encourage conservation.

IT IS TIME TO PASS A REAL PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, emergency room nurses are in town, and I commend and congratulate them for the outstanding work they do. This is also a great time to pass a real Patients' Bill of Rights, one like the Ganske-Dingell bill that ensures that medical decisions come before business decisions, one that ensures that doctors and patients and nurses have the opportunity to decide what kind of treatment there ought to be. It ensures that external review of individuals who do not have a self-interest are the ones making the decisions and recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, it is not like the bill that was introduced yesterday, that allows HMOs to do their own reviewing, to have their own internal reviews to determine whether or not what they are doing is good and right. That is like having the fox guard the chicken house.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to be real, we will pass the Ganske-Dingell bill for real patients' rights.

AMERICA HAS RESPONSIBILITY TO MEET MORE OF OUR OWN ENERGY NEEDS

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

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, even though President Bush inherited the energy problem, I appreciate that

he is shooting straight with the American people about what it will take to have reliable, affordable and environmentally clean energy for our country.

America, we do have the responsibility to meet more of our own energy needs. Common sense tells us we will need a balanced game plan based on conservation, on new technology and new supply. There are no shortcuts, no Band-Aids, no steps that we can skip.

The discharge petition Members see today is more Hollywood theatrics, more Band-Aids, and we simply cannot afford it. If we work together, Republican and Democrat, CEO and environmentalist, we are capable, and we can achieve energy independence.

Mr. Speaker, this issue is more than economics, it is one of national security. As long as America relies on OPEC and foreign countries for more than half of our daily energy needs, we are vulnerable. And there is no need why the most prosperous Nation in the world cannot take responsibility for our own energy needs. It is time for America to take responsibility for America's energy.

THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY IS AT IT AGAIN

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

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, the pharmaceutical industry is at it again. This industry which has spent \$200 million in the last 3 years to defeat all efforts to lower the cost of prescription drugs, this industry which has 300 paid lobbyists here on Capitol Hill, continues to charge the American people by far the highest prices in the world for the same exact prescription drugs.

Mr. Speaker, American women should not have to go over the Canadian border to buy tamoxifen, a breast cancer drug, for one-tenth the price that it is charged in the United States. Seniors should not have to go to Mexico or Europe to pick up the same drugs for a fraction of the price.

Mr. Speaker, in a globalized economy, prescription drug distributors and pharmacists should be able to purchase and sell FDA safety-approved medicine at the same prices as in other countries. The passage of reimportation will lower the cost of medicine in this country by 30 to 50 percent. Let us pass the Sanders-Crowley-DeLauro amendment in the agriculture appropriations bill, which will allow Americans to get fair prices for their prescription drugs.

AMERICA NEEDS TO BE NET EXPORTER OF POWER, NOT NET IMPORTER

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues out West, I want to remind

them the best way to get to a most efficient market is allow the market to work. If this country wants low-cost, reliable electricity, we must have a diverse energy portfolio. We must have coal, nuclear, hydro, renewables, and expand our base load generating capacity. If we want low-cost fuel, we need to drill for it and transport it and refine it. States need to be net exporters, not net importers of power generation. Our country needs to be a net exporter of power, not a net importer of power.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the State of Illinois and Governor Ryan for passing and signing the Empower Illinois Act, which will incentivize clean coal technology and generation in southern Illinois, and I applaud my colleague, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BOUCHER) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD), and support the Need Act which will do the same thing with a national energy policy, that we will push through the Committee on Energy and Commerce on the floor of the House later on this fall.

CONGRESS NEEDS TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST PRICE GOUGING

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, from the other side of the aisle we hear platitudes about choice, which consumers do not want, and competition, which does not exist. For months, the mounting evidence of manipulation in the energy markets has been piling up and piling up while the Bush administration, and their hand-picked appointees to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, have taken a hands-off attitude. After all, it is some of their most generous campaign contributors, many of whom are based in Texas, who are making obscene amounts of money by manipulating the energy markets.

Mr. Speaker, we would not want to offend them just to help consumers. A month ago it turned out Reliant Energy of Texas had tied its energy traders to the plant operators and had them shut down the plant to drive up the price.

Duke Energy employees have stated that they were told to sabotage the plant and throw away the repair parts to drive up the price of energy on the west coast.

The reaction on that side of the aisle is, oh, let us not make this a partisan issue. Oh, let us be nice.

Mr. Speaker, consumers are being fleeced. It is time for real action. Sign the discharge petition, and this Congress will take a stand for consumers against the price gouging.