

We all remember the promises that campaign finance reform was supposed to remove unregulated money from the political process. Well, not only did it fail to deliver on its promise, an argument can be made that it actually is worse.

527 groups have grown in importance and influence with little or no disclosure of who funds them. According to published reports, staffers of the distinguished House minority leader acknowledge they hold weekly meetings with the leaders of MoveOn.org.

A recent fundraising e-mail sent on by MoveOn.org stated, "Now it's our party. We bought it. We own it, and we're taking it back."

Strange that a group that claims to be nonpartisan for tax purposes claims to have bought a political party. The limited disclosure required by these groups makes it nearly impossible to determine who is claiming to have bought the Democratic Party. 527 groups spent over half a billion dollars in 2004 with no regulation from the FEC.

If we truly want to enhance disclosure and remove unregulated money from the political process, we must do something about 527s.

STRIKE REFINERY REVITALIZATION PROVISIONS

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to the unnecessary refinery revitalization provisions in the energy bill.

The energy bill would allow unrestricted sitings of refineries in low-income and underrepresented minority communities and strips States and local municipalities of their right to protect public health.

Most refinery communities are found in low-income minority areas, and they do not have the political power to protect themselves and their families. These communities have the least ability to defend themselves from corporate pollution and are the most vulnerable to environmental and public health problems. Yet they are the very targets in this language.

I believe the bill will only worsen the present and future environmental justice problems afflicting Latinos, African Americans, and Native Americans.

Before we harm the health of the most underserved populations, strip States and communities of their right to protect themselves, we should have a real dialogue about the far reaching impacts of this language in our communities.

Today I am asking the Committee on Rules to allow me to offer an amendment to strike this language during floor debate on the energy bill. I urge my colleagues to protect the public health and States' rights and support my amendment to strike the refinery revitalization provisions.

CELEBRATING A LANDMARK ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR BULGARIA

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week the European Parliament made a historic decision for approval of Bulgaria to join the European Union in 2007.

As co-chair of the Congressional Bulgaria Caucus, I am please to congratulate Ambassador Elena Poptodorova, who represents Sofia in Washington so professionally.

Since the negotiations began in 2000, Bulgarians have proven they are eager to serve as active members of the European Union. They quickly took the right reforms to earn an important role in the international community. By sending over 400 troops to Iraq to rebuild the country and providing troops in Afghanistan that I have visited at Bagram, Bulgaria is also helping to win the war on terrorism.

In addition to NATO membership, Bulgaria's membership in the European Union will prove to be a landmark event in the country's history. I know Bulgaria will continue the Bulgaria miracle of economic success and military security.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11.

WE NEED THE ENERGY BILL

(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, energy powers the tools and the machines we need to live and our economy needs to grow; but when energy supplies are tight, families face higher prices and our economy faces a deteriorating energy infrastructure.

In recent years, this has caused home heating bills to skyrocket and force many U.S. manufacturers to slow production, lay off workers, and even go out of business.

This week, the House will debate and vote on a national energy policy. Again, if this sounds familiar, that is because we have gone through this process several times already only to have a few Senators stall this long overdue legislation.

The National Energy Policy Act of 2005 is very comprehensive. We should not let the opponents of change stop us from enacting a sensible, progressive energy policy for America. We need it and America's families need it.

HONORING CONRAD ALBERTY

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of America's heroes,

Mr. Conrad Alberty of Rockingham County, North Carolina.

Conrad fought for our country in the Philippines during the darkest days of World War II and later bore the terrible scars of enemy captivity. He exemplified the extraordinary sacrifice made by our military for our freedom. Conrad was a prisoner of war and is one of the few living survivors of the Bataan Death March. He was just 16 years old when he endured the most inhumane treatment that man can do to man on the death march and later in an enemy prison camp.

Coincidentally, this month marks the 63rd anniversary of the surrender of U.S. troops to the Japanese on the Bataan Peninsula.

During his military service, Mr. Alberty demonstrated courage, love of country, and devotion to duty. He did not give up under the most desperate circumstances.

Today by recognizing Mr. Conrad Alberty, we also honor the role of our Armed Forces in protecting our country and our liberty. Thank you, Mr. Alberty and may on God bless you.

HENRY HYDE, NO FINER PUBLIC SERVANT

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the very distinguished chairman of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), announced his planned retirement for the end of this Congress. I would like to say this is my 25th year that I have been honored to serve here in the Congress, and I have served with no finer public servant than the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) has clearly been a principled leader who has provided bold and dynamic examples for us in a wide range of areas. We all know that he was a great champion in the effort to ensure that we do not see taxpayer dollars expended on abortion-on-demand. We know the key role that he played in dealing with the challenge that we faced with impeachment. We know that in recent years he has been suffering physically.

I have got to say that the Chaplain is here in the Chamber, and I will never forget at the unveiling of the portrait of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) when he said that he was instructed when he became the Chaplain that he refer to everyone by their given name, except for one individual. The gentleman from Illinois to him is Mr. HYDE. And while I am privileged to call him HENRY, I will tell you that I will greatly miss him when he is not a Member of the next Congress.

REMEMBERING JOHNNIE L. COCHRAN, JR.

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, the public may now know Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr., as a high-profile, superbly dressed, superstar attorney with a signature smile that swayed everyone he met, including many of the multi-million dollar clients that he represented.

However, as a personal friend of Johnnie's, I saw another side. Yes, he did everything with class, style, dignity and extreme care; but in addition he was a warm, loving, caring, attentive friend and community leader.

Johnnie Cochran was a brilliant attorney whose untimely death is a loss to the world. His legal genius was compared to Justice Thurgood Marshall, his hero and his idol; Clarence Darrow; F. Lee Bailey; Professor Charles Ogletree and other legendary legal scholars.

Johnnie Cochran was an incredible human being who really cared about the plight of the poor and disadvantaged regardless of race, color, creed, or religion. Johnnie was often fond of saying, "The clients I cared about the most are the No Js, the ones who nobody knows."

Attorney Cochran truly believed in justice for all. Even after death, Johnnie's legal legacy was larger than life. His funeral last week in Los Angeles, entitled "Johnnie's Journey To Justice," was a celebration of his incredible life.

The A-list of celebrity clients were among more than 5,000 admirers saying good-bye to their hero who fought for civil rights, police reform, and basic human rights for everyone.

The Reverend William Epps, Johnnie's home pastor of the historic Second Baptist Church of Los Angeles, the first church that Martin Luther King spoke in when he came to Los Angeles, and Reverend Calvin Butts of Abyssinia Baptist Church, Harlem, New York, presided over this joyful funeral service, which was held in the great West Angeles Cathedral in my district.

I would say that Johnnie led a very important life for a lot of people, and we will remember him always for bringing justice to not only the poor but middle class and wealthy. May God bless his soul.

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ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, at the base of the Statue of Liberty is a poem that reads: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free." Understood in this fundamental principle is that our Nation would welcome anyone in an orderly and a legal process.

Yet, on a daily basis thousands of illegal aliens cross our border, encouraged by the Mexican Government,

which provides a copy of the Mexican Migrant Guide, full of tips on how to blend into our society and receive benefits once they get here.

The illegal alien population is, admittedly, 11 million in the United States, with the actual number probably closer to 20 million. The problems are no longer confined to border States with nearly 250,000 illegal aliens now calling Georgia home, placing my home State in the top 10 with illegal populations.

Nearly every public service, from our schools to our hospitals, are suffering financially caring for illegal aliens.

Mr. Speaker, Americans recognize the economic and national security concerns posed by this increasing problem. It is time we take action and secure our Nation's borders, responsibly solve this national emergency and hold neighbor nations accountable for their actions.

DRILLING IN ANWR

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, we are going to vote this week on an energy bill in the House. Energy independence should be a goal for this Congress. Worldwide demand for petroleum has increased during the last decade. The growth in production has been relatively flat.

The inevitable result is higher prices at the gasoline pump. The reality is that it takes time to go from the oil patch to the gas station, and we have lost considerable time in that regard.

In 1995, in the 104th Congress, H.R. 2491 would have allowed oil exploration in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. The Department of Energy has estimated that between 1- and 1.3 million barrels of oil a day could be derived from this source.

Unfortunately, this legislation was vetoed by then-President Clinton. That was 10 years ago, and given a timeline of 7 to 14 years for building the pipeline structure, it is time that we could scarcely afford.

Mr. Speaker, I have been to ANWR. The vast coastal plain is unsuitable for habitation during the summer months because of its marshy consistency. Any caribou unlikely enough to calve in this region would likely die from exsanguination at the hands of the mosquitoes there.

The people in ANWR, the people of Kaktovik, Alaska, are counting on this Congress to do the right thing and allow them, the rightful owners, to begin developing the resources as was granted them upon statehood in 1959.

As we say in Texas, "time's a'wasting."

SPENCER, IOWA: THE NUMBER ONE PLACE TO LIVE IN AMERICA

(Mr. KING of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, this is a mission of joy for me. On the floor of this Congress, I am pleased to recognize the city of Spencer, Iowa, as the number one place to live in America.

This is not surprising to the folks in western Iowa. America is now aware of what we have known for a long time. Spencer is not just a great town to raise a family; it is an excellent place to live. Tucked away in fields as far as the eye can see, Spencer is a town full of services, recreation, culture, entertainment and wonderful people.

I just celebrated with the people of Spencer the opening of my office on Grand Avenue.

Large enough to offer many of the services of a larger city and still small enough that people know and trust their neighbors, it is the kind of trusting place where people leave their doors open and the keys in their cars when parked outside the coffee shop.

In this town, if you were to walk into the Sisters Cafe or Carroll's Bakery on any given morning, you would see the citizens of Spencer making time for each other. It is the kind of place where you know your neighbors and strangers are just friends you have not met yet.

Congratulations, Spencer, Iowa. You are number one.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING ISSUANCE OF 500,000TH DESIGN PATENT BY UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 53) expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the issuance of the 500,000th design patent by the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 53

Whereas the United States is the world leader in innovation and ingenuity;

Whereas the United States Patent and Trademark Office has protected and encouraged that innovation through the issuance of patents; and

Whereas on December 21, 2004, the United States Patent and Trademark Office awarded the 500,000th design patent to DaimlerChrysler Corporation for the design of the Chrysler Crossfire: Now, therefore, be it