

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CHOCOLA).

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

There was no objection.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT E. ANDREWS

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

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, today I pay tribute to a close personal friend, a mentor, a dedicated public servant and a respected attorney, Robert E. "Bob" Andrews of Gainesville, Georgia.

Bob was many things to many people: a devoted husband who was always concerned about Katherine's welfare; a proud father whose home and office were decorated with pictures of his children; a decorated war hero who remained a patriot in the defense of freedom; a skilled attorney whose advice and counsel were sought by many; a legislator who brought leadership and insight to the Georgia General Assembly. But, above all, he was a caring and compassionate southern gentleman.

Bob Andrews was a man of faith. His faith in God was the earnest money for his blessings of family, friends and health. His faith in himself was the manifestation of a purpose-centered life.

Bob liked to laugh. He could always tell a funny story from his early years as a practicing attorney when the courtroom was the focal point for community entertainment. It was in that environment that he honed his skills in cross-examination and oral argument.

Bob was a true student of the law, who loved and respected its discipline. His library table was always piled high with appellate reports that reflected his meticulous attention to the details of his profession. He valued knowledge, political dialogue and common courtesy.

Bob Andrews was a kind person. In a profession that is often noted for its viciousness, Bob was an attorney whose most severe rebuke of someone would come when he would wrinkle up his nose and simply say, "He just should not have done that."

As the passage of years and declining of health took its toll on his mobility, he never lost his sharp mind, except on one occasion when I visited him for a second time at the hospital. I commented that this was a different room than on my prior visit. Bob laughed and said that all hospital rooms looked the same to him.

I am thankful that he did not have to spend more time there.

The psalmist described a blessed man, in part, is one who is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth fruit in his season. Bob Andrews was a blessed man who, in turn, blessed us as he shared the fruits of his labor and allowed us to learn and grow in the shade of his branches.

If God allows lawyers into heaven, and I believe he does, Bob Andrews is there regaling the saints with his exploits and humorous commentary on his passage through this life; and God must be smiling as he listens to a good man who did his best.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mrs. MALONEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ENERGY PLAN FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for half the time until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, what a day we have had here in the House. We have talked about energy policy. And having an energy bill come to the floor of this House is something that we have waited for for quite a period of time.

I want to congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) and our colleagues on the Committee on Energy and Commerce. As we have had this occur today, it has been quite an effort. Our Energy Committee, last week we talked about it earlier in the week and we talked about it the past week. We had about a third of the Democrats in the House join us in voting that bill out of committee last week. They did it because it is a good bill. And they did it because it is time for us to have an energy bill, and it is the right step in the right way at this point in time.

I know that we have some across the aisle, many who are going to follow the liberal leadership there and walk in lockstep with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), but I think we are going to see more of the House Democrats join us to make this energy bill a reality for the American people.

I would like to remind my colleagues that over the last few weeks we have seen quite a bit of bipartisan support on some of our legislation. We had 122 Democrats vote with us on the continuity of government bill, 50 Democrats voted with us on the class action bill, 73 Democrats voted with the Republicans on bankruptcy reform, and 42 supported our repeal of the death tax and the REAL I.D. Act.

So we look forward tomorrow to having our Democrat colleagues from across the aisle join us as we move forward on our Nation's energy policy.

We have several Members who have joined us tonight to talk about energy and to talk about energy policy. One of those is the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL), and I would like to yield some time to the gentleman to talk with us about the energy bill. I also want to thank the gentleman for the wonderful leadership that he has shown on this bill.

At this point, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL).

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

I think this week and this day and tomorrow are probably two of the most important days to the youth of our country because we are discussing an energy bill, an energy bill that might just lay out what their future might be. If I had a youngster who was a sophomore in high school, a junior or maybe a senior, I would be very concerned about their future if we do not solve our energy problems.

Today and tomorrow I think the most important bill that is going to come before this Congress is going to be decided, and I think we are going to pass it. We are going to send it over to the Senate. We are going to go to work on the Senate to try to get those two votes that we have not been able to get in 4 years over there, 4 years.

We have to make this out as a generational bill because we are talking about a generation of youngsters that might have to all go overseas to fight a war to bring us some energy here. It is a shame if they have to do that when we have plenty of energy right here at home.

I know that back in the early days, and I go back to history sometimes, if you look at the past and see that we should not make the mistakes of the past; but sometimes they light a light for us to see what happened and see what caused it to happen.

Back in the 1940s, back in the late 1930s, we had a President named Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He made a lot of great speeches. One of the great speeches he made was about fear, about the Great Depression. He said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." And he led us out of that Depression.

But one of the other speeches that he made that scholars have noted and many people have listened to and many have used it as a part of their thrust in their discussion, he said, "To some generations much is given, of some generations much is expected, but this generation has a rendezvous with destiny." That rendezvous with destiny turned out to be World War II.

As we listened on our Philco radios, we heard him make these speeches. He spoke those words. He spoke those words following the action of Cordell Hull, who was Secretary of State then; Henry Stimson, Secretary of War. They had both cut Japan off from energy. We supplied them their entire energy thrust and they depended on us for it.

When we cut them off, we should have known that they had to break out and go somewhere. They had to go south into Malaysia. They had to have energy because the country of Japan, who did not hate this country, Admiral Perry had opened them up to trade earlier, but they were forced to go south into Malaysia or do something because they had to have energy. That was an energy war; there is no question about it.

I think, as they did when they cut that off with Japan, having 13 months' national existence, war was inevitable and that was an energy war.

Sometime later the Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler, went into the Ploesti oil fields. He went east into the Ploesti oil fields. Their tanks and their airplanes were out of fuel. They had to go east. That was a battle for energy. Energy caused that action.

Then George Bush, the father of our present President, just some 10 or 11 years ago sent 450,000 youngsters over

to the desert in Iraq. That was a war for energy. Not because we did not like the Emir of Kuwait or we wanted to help him for some reason. It was a war to keep a bad guy named Saddam Hussein, who is now in a cage, from getting his foot on half the known energy sources in the entire world.

Nations will fight for energy; there is no question about that. But we do not have to because we can solve our own problems. With this bill, H.R. 6, we can prevent a war. We can drill on ANWR. We can drill up to the depths of the gulf. We can go down 5- or 6,000 feet or 10,000 feet but we cannot get it back up. But with technology we can do that. That is provided for in this bill.

We certainly can have energy if we pass this bill. And then our youngsters can say with a great bit of courage and great bit of hope in their voice, What school am I going to attend, rather than what branch of service am I going to have to enter.

This country will fight for energy. We do not have to. This Congress has to fight for H.R. 6. We have to pass H.R. 6, and if we do that, our youngsters will not have to fight that war that the past has indicated could happen.

□ 2245

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman so much for his thoughts, and I thank him for his leadership on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the gentleman from Texas is exactly right. This is an issue about the future. It is an issue that affects our children, and as he said, it is an issue about the economy, about security and how we need to look at our sources of oil, our security, and many times we feel we are too reliant on foreign oil, which we are.

Right now, 62 percent of the Nation's oil supply is coming from foreign sources. If we do not take action and pass an energy bill, it is going to be 75 percent by 2010. So we know that action is necessary and it is needed now.

The gentleman from Texas also mentioned new technologies, new ways of doing things, and that is something that certainly we have to have our eye towards. We look at the needs for today and then as we bridge to the future.

At this point, Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) who will talk with us a little bit about liquefied natural gas and about turning that corner, beginning to look at things a little bit differently.

Mr. TERRY. Madam Speaker, I do appreciate the gentlewoman from Tennessee yielding some to me so we can talk about what I think is one of the most important bills that we will vote on in the 109th Congress, and that is a comprehensive energy package.

As the gentlewoman from Tennessee mentioned, this bill is both forward thinking and now thinking. There are alternative technologies. There is I

think an incredible statement toward renewable fuels and alternative technologies like the fuel cell, but we also have to recognize some of our issues that face us now, and what I am talking about is the price of natural gas and how it is impacting our economy and our families in America, especially agri business and small businesses.

Natural gas, by the way, accounts for nearly a quarter of America's energy supply and is used by more than half of the households and businesses in America. In fact, in my district of Omaha, Nebraska, about 65 percent of the households are heated, and by the way, it gets cold, maybe not like in the gentlewoman's part of Tennessee, it gets pretty cold in Omaha during the winter, and we rely on natural gas.

Unfortunately, the United States faces a natural gas challenge that threatens the profitability of almost every sector of our economy, as well as our citizens' quality of life. Nationwide natural gas prices just 5 years ago were \$1.50 per thousand cubic feet. Today, as this chart shows, it is off the charts. It is over \$7 and has been for the last two to three weeks.

Let us look at how the United States' natural gas prices compare to the rest of the world. In Venezuela, it is about 70 cents per thousand cubic feet, 40 cents in Africa, 80 cents in Russia. The next, by the way, is Europe with \$3.70, less than half of what we pay in the United States.

Farm States, including Nebraska, have been hit especially hard by higher natural gas prices since natural gas is the primary material in nitrogen fertilizers, as well as the key fuel for irrigation and drying of grains. Anhydrous ammonia fertilizer has increased from about \$175 per ton in 2000 to as much as \$375 last planting season.

About half of America's nitrogen fertilizer is now imported. Let me restate that. Nearly half of our farmers' nitrogen fertilizer is now imported, mostly due to these high costs of natural gas. This is going to have a severe impact on our economy and for our farmers.

The increased cost of natural gas has played a substantial role in losing nearly 3 million U.S. manufacturing jobs over the last 5 years, according to the Industrial Energy Consumers of America. Whether these jobs were located in an auto plant in Ohio or a petrochemical manufacturer in Houston, many have been moved overseas, chasing the cheaper natural gas where it is more abundant and plentiful.

These reasons for concern are magnified when one considers U.S. natural gas consumption is expected to increase over the next 20 years. Simultaneously, domestic natural gas production is falling about 1 percent a year.

Let me show my colleagues this chart. We actually have a decent supply of natural gas, but most of it is off limits and stays off limits in this bill, especially around the coastal regions of California and Florida.

We do encourage some additional domestic production of natural gas. Last

year, this Congress passed a pipeline from Alaska down to Chicago, but I am telling my colleagues, looking at the politics in Alaska, this may take decades before that pipeline is run from Alaska to the continental United States to provide some price relief for our economy and for heating our homes.

So we must look at these natural gas prices in a holistic way, meaning domestic production, pipeline, and we still have to realize that to meet the increased needs of natural gas within our United States, we are going to unfortunately have to import some of our natural gas. Otherwise, if we do not look at it in a holistic way, domestic, Alaskan pipeline and liquid natural gas imports, natural gas prices may increase to \$13 or \$14 per thousand cubic feet.

Unfortunately, to import liquid natural gas, we have got about three or four facilities today. There are many applications to site liquid natural gas to an import terminal where the liquid natural gas comes in, it goes in, it is unloaded, it is turned into a gas and then put into pipelines, but we are experiencing the typical not-in-my-backyard with some extreme overexaggerations of the dangerousness of liquid natural gas. Because localities and States have played on this fear, those localities, in fact, in Maine, a locality even, though the States have issued permits, are approved permits, a locality stops an LNG terminal. This forces us to have to look at different ways.

In this base bill, we in the Committee on Energy and Commerce worked on this together in committee. We recognized that what we have to do is streamline this process. If we are going to help alleviate the pressures on price, we have to give more authority for this international and national commerce to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. We want the States to have a part in here. What we just do not want is for the States and localities, based on NIMBY, to have veto power. This is in the base bill.

Tomorrow, we are going to have a movement by a gentleman from Massachusetts and Delaware to strip out this provision, and it is only going to hurt manufacturers, small businesses, agri business and people who heat their homes with natural gas, companies that generate electricity by natural gas. We must overcome this provision tomorrow for the overall economic and basically lifestyle of the citizens of the United States.

So I want to thank the gentlewoman for reserving this time so we can help educate our colleagues and America on something as important as liquid natural gas and its implications to their budgets at home.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this issue and for his diligent work on behalf of his constituents and on behalf of all Americans as we are working on this bill and bringing it for-

ward to the House, getting it ready to move forward and looking forward to the time that the President signs this into law, so that we do have an energy policy.

A couple of points I would like to highlight with my colleagues that the gentleman from Nebraska brought forward to us, this bill is, as he said, forward thinking and it is now thinking, and it is important as we look at these two provisions that we realize it is this way because we have to think about small business. We have to think about farmers. We have to think about the impact of this on the economy.

Madam Speaker, as the gentleman from Nebraska has said, this is about jobs. We think about our economy. This wonderful free enterprise system that we have in this great Nation of ours has created nearly 3 million jobs in the past 2 years, and we need to continue that. This economic engine needs to continue working.

We do not hear enough about the jobs creation that has happened. We do not hear enough about the tax relief that has happened over the past couple of years, but we know that jobs creation is such an important part and an energy policy will serve as a boost for that jobs creation.

I thank the gentleman from Nebraska, and at this point I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ) who has been a leader on the energy issue, has done a wonderful job for his constituents in the State of Colorado and is going to talk with us for a few minutes about ANWR and the implications of ANWR.

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman and commend her for organizing this hour that we can talk about this energy bill, but we all hope we not only hope can pass on this floor but can actually in this Congress become law because we have waited too long. The American people have waited too long to have an energy policy that is a little bit more than one day at a time. So I do, again, commend the gentlewoman.

ANWR has been an issue in this Congress and much of the United States for years and years and years. When I got elected to Congress in 2002, ANWR was very much on my mind because one of the first issues we talked about was an energy bill.

I had an opportunity to go up and see that much talked about, much described, very valuable piece of real estate in August of 2003 with a few of my congressional colleagues. I have in front of me tonight a map that puts Alaska in relative size to the lower 48 States in proper perspective. ANWR is in this region. The area we are actually talking about exploring is represented by that green dot, just 2,000 acres. 2,000 acres is roughly the size of the St. Louis airport that most of us and many Americans have landed in. I have also heard that in relative size it is about like Dulles, which we are all very familiar with back here in the Wash-

ington, D.C., area. It is about the same size as the land dedicated to the Dulles airport as compared to the entire State of Virginia. So we are talking about a relatively small part of a massive piece of real estate.

This map very quickly puts in perspective one other key thing, the amount of oil represented by 1 million barrels per day coming from that one small piece of real estate, and that is a conservative estimate of the amount of oil that can be generated from this ANWR reserve, over 1 million barrels a day.

Several other energy sources are addressed in this bill, wind power, which I certainly embrace coming from Colorado. We produce a little wind power ourselves, but so do our friends from Rhode Island and Connecticut represented in gray by about 3.7 million acres dedicated to wind energy. To generate the same amount of total energy is 1 million barrels of oil from ANWR.

In red, down at Lake Okeechobee, where they utilize solar, as we do also in Colorado, but some 448,000 acres are dedicated to solar energy generation, to again apply the energy to 1 million barrels from ANWR in one day.

□ 2300

Or in green, again the coastal plain, or in black the acreage, as I mentioned, from the Lambert Airport.

Ethanol is in yellow. Massive piece of ground. We have heard much about ethanol already tonight on the floor of the House. Ethanol is also of interest to the eastern plains, especially in Colorado, where we grow a whole lot of corn.

I see one of my colleagues from Iowa here tonight grinning a bit. I know it is important to him. But you see the massive amount of land acreage, 80.5 million acres that would have to be dedicated to growing corn to produce as much ethanol as we get from a million barrels of oil a day in Alaska.

Now, to the point I really wanted to address, and this is the point. We ought to remember that there are precious few people who actually live in that very difficult, very hostile environment in the world, ANWR, which is literally on the coast of the Arctic Ocean. I went up and visited that. If I can put this map back up, I will put it in proper perspective.

Prudhoe Bay, which we often talk about, is located here, again literally on the edge of the Arctic Ocean. A small village of Kaktovik is roughly where that green dot is. We actually flew over in a very small plane, landed on a gravel runway and visited these people in Kaktovik; about 270 of them actually manage to survive in that very, very difficult environment.

How do they do that? They still hunt the whale. They go out when the Arctic Ocean opens up a little bit and get in the open water and they are allowed to get three whale a year. They fish for Arctic char and they survive on them. And, yes, they hunt and kill and eat

the caribou meat, as they have for generations and generations. That is how they survive.

I submit to this body and submit to the American people that if anyone is concerned about preserving that environment, it is these people. Not because it is pristine, not because they like the view, not because the air is very, very clean, but it is about survival. It is about their very existence. If that environment changes, these people have a very, very serious, life-threatening problem. If anybody is interested in maintaining that environment unchanged, it is them.

And we all know what the environment is supposed to look like. It looks like this for a small window of the year. It is covered with caribou and a little bit of short grass, as I saw it in August when I was there. And, actually, the caribou, from 1972 to current days, in about a 30-year window, have increased, not decreased. Since we did the Prudhoe Bay development, they have actually increased by about tenfold, a thousand percent. And we have heard much about that.

That is how ANWR looks some of the year. This is how ANWR looks most of the year. That is not the moon, that is actually ice, and that is about all that is there. It is frozen and it is ice covered.

How much oil is there? The experts, the scientists tell us that if we would develop ANWR, and frankly, had we gone ahead and done it in 1995, when Congress actually approved it and President Clinton vetoed the bill, today we would be bringing over a million barrels a day to the lower 48 from ANWR.

How much is a million barrels a day? Actually, they project almost 1.4 million a day from ANWR. That is almost as much as we import daily from, yes, Saudi Arabia, our largest single source of imported oil, almost a direct offset to Saudi Arabia.

Now, what do the people in ANWR think? Final point. We asked Fenton Rexford, who is the President of the Native Indian Corporation that populates that little piece of real estate, well, that very large piece of real estate but very small group of people. What should we do with ANWR? I asked him the question. Two-word answer: Drill it. I said, Really? He said, Yes, drill it. I said, Is that what your villagers think? He had already told us there were 271 people living there that day. He said, well, at least 270 of them agree. That is close to unanimous.

One of my colleagues said, but what about the caribou? This was after he told us how they depend on the caribou for their very survival. He said, What about it? Well, my colleague said, If we happen to drill there, explore there, develop there, we might scare them off or change their migratory pattern. And the president looked at us and he said, You are missing something here, and we all leaned forward in eager anticipation. He said you are missing something here.

We said, What is that? We hunt them and kill them and they come back. And we all said, Oh, yeah, you do. We hunt them and kill them and they come back. You are not going to scare them off by exploring for a little bit of oil out here. He said again, Drill it.

With that, Madam Speaker, I yield back.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for the explanation of this. I think it is so important for us to keep this in perspective. We are talking about 2,000 acres when we talk about ANWR, and it is in many hundreds of thousands of acres. It is like putting a quarter on the dining room table, that is the relationship of that space. So I thank the gentleman from Colorado for his work on the issue.

The gentleman from Idaho, who is a member and a leader on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, has certainly worked on some of the issues dealing with refineries and permitting. We have not had a new refinery built in the country in 30 years, Madam Speaker. And as I mentioned earlier, the bill addresses our needs for today and looks toward the future.

Obviously, there are some in this body who would like for us to flip a switch and tomorrow start driving hydrogen fuel cell cars and to start doing things we would all love to see happen, to look at more alternative sources. But we have to think about where our economy is today and meeting those needs for oil and gas today while at the same time we are planning for the future.

The gentleman from Idaho (Mr. OTTER) is going to talk with us for a few moments about refineries and permitting and some of the points that are covered that address the needs of today and of our economy today. So I thank the gentleman for joining us and I yield to him.

Mr. OTTER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership and also for offering some time and providing us the opportunity tonight to speak to the energy bill.

I also compliment the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) for the insights that they have given us tonight into the whole concept of the energy bill. We are not talking about a few of the hot points that the news media like to talk an awful lot about.

I cannot go through the process that we did last week in formulating this energy bill without thinking of a childhood poem, and it goes like this: "I saw a group of men in my hometown, I saw a group of men tearing a building down. With a heave and a ho and a mighty yell, they swung a beam and a sidewalk fell.

"So I said to the foreman, 'Hey, are these men skilled, you know, the kind I'd hire if I wanted to build?' And he laughed and said, 'Why, no, indeed,

common labor is all I need. For with common labor I can tear down in a day or two what it took a builder 10 years to do.'

And so I thought to myself as I walked away, Which of those roles am I going to play?"

The 109th Congress, Madam Speaker, is deciding now what role we are going to play. Are we going to build an energy future? Are we going to build an economic future for this great Nation of ours and for future generations? Are we going to put in place today a public policy that will serve this Nation in our competitive efforts with the rest of the world?

I can tell you there is no other place in the world that this argument is going on, of whether or not we are going to energize our natural resources, energize our native creative genius in order to provide the cheapest and the most abundant and most reliable energy source that we possibly can. Yet this is a heartfelt debate.

Fortunately for us, with the leadership of our chairman, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON), we were able to come out of the committee with a great energy bill and in a bipartisan fashion.

□ 2310

In fact, I myself have voted on this energy bill. Although I have only been in this Congress for 4 years and 4 months, I have voted on the energy bill four times, with the great hope that was going to be one thing as a Member from Idaho's First Congressional District I could leave as a legacy. Yet 4 years and 4 months later, we are still wanting and still faced with those who will tear down rather than build up.

I would like to talk about something that has not gotten, I believe, the attention that it needs. As the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) mentioned early on, we have not built a refinery in this Nation in nearly 30 years. Garyville, Louisiana, was the last refinery we built in this Nation, and yet every day we continue to consume more and more refined gas. So our capacity to consume is increasing, yet our capacity in relationship to produce and to refine is dwindling. Thus, we are counting more and more and more for yet another strategic part of our value-added energy on some foreign country.

Madam Speaker, last fall I went down to Venezuela and visited Hugo Chavez. One of the reasons I did that was because there are several Idaho concerns down there probably mining more coal than any place else in the world, and mining more silver and gold than any place else in the world. There is an exploration company that is environmentally responsible in their exploration and in their research and development for Venezuela's natural resources.

One of the other reasons I went down there was to see where we are importing a million, 800,000 barrels of refined

fuel a day. We import 14 million barrels a day. We use 21 million barrels a day. So for two-thirds of our consumption, we are now relying on some other country that may be friend or foe, and Mr. Chavez has already suggested he is not going to be really friendly towards us. Yet we are still relying for two-thirds of the strategic element for our economy on some other nation. We are relying on their labor, their tax base. We are relying on building up their economy in order to support our own rather than doing that ourselves.

Part of this bill we are looking at today is environmentally streamlined permitting. We heard many, many times in the committee, as the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) will be able to attest to, we heard many times from the opposition, those who would not build but rather tear down, that there is not one permit that is waiting to go through the bureaucratic process, not one permit in the United States. I would suggest there ought to be a reason and that we need to take a look at that.

One of the reasons nobody gets a permit is they have been denied for so long. They are so expensive and have been denied for so long. One thing I found out in Caracas, Venezuela, every U.S. oil company that owns a refinery in the United States is down there today asking for a permit to build one in Venezuela. There are permits being given throughout the world and permits being requested. Unfortunately, they are being requested where they find a friendly permitting process, or a permitting process.

And I asked the fellows at lunch that day, are you telling me it is easier to get a permit down here?

They said, no, environmentally speaking, we have to obey the same laws. Safety-wise we have to obey the same laws. They are no different than the United States except it happens. It happens. In the United States you can sit around for months and years, and then decades before you finally get a permit. And that is just too lengthy and too costly a process.

They said, we come down here and we can get a permit in 6 to 8 months. We have to bond it and do everything we do in the United States. The thing is, these people are working with us. That is why we are here permitting.

The other thing that this bill looks to is something that a lot of people in the United States do not realize. If a refinery today, one in Garyville, Louisiana, should happen to come across some new technology and that new technology would say they could increase their efficiency or their production capacity or their yield, and it happens to be more than 10 percent, they do not want to do it. The reason they do not want to do it is our environmental laws authorized by the Environmental Protection Agency would say that new 10 percent is new source.

What new source means is you have to go back and permit the whole plant,

not just the 10 percent increased, but you have to go back and permit 100 percent of the plant's production.

So they may have increased since 30 years ago when the last one was permitted, they may have increased 6 or 7 percent, but they do not want to go beyond that or it will be very expensive to go on.

For our economy and for the jobs that are increased and energized and permitted, refinery capacity would do that for this country of ours. For all of the good that could happen, I would say it is time for us, and we will be deciding tomorrow who they are that want to build and who they are that want to tear down. I am proud to say that all the folks that you have listened to tonight are the ones that want to build. I am amongst them, and I am sure the majority will be tomorrow.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. OTTER) for his leadership to our committee.

To mention a couple of things that the gentleman highlighted, and one is the amount of time that has gone into this bill. During the 107th Congress that the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. OTTER) spoke about, that was 2001–2002, the Republican-led Committee on Energy and Commerce held 28 hearings related to a comprehensive energy bill. In 2002, the committee spent 21 hours marking up an energy bill and considering 79 amendments. In 2003, there were 22 hours and 80 amendments. In 3 years the Republicans in the House have held 80 public hearings with 12 committee markups and 279 amendments. That is the amount of work and energy that has gone into what the gentleman so appropriately describes as a total-concept bill.

Another point was about the permitting. One of the things that we have all learned so well in our public service is if you want less of something, pile on the taxes, pile on the regulation because you are going to get less of it. If you want more of something, you have lighter regulation, lower taxes; and you are going to see that flourish.

Those are certainly points that we take to heart as we look at the energy bill. I thank the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. OTTER) for his good work on this effort.

A gentleman who has been a leader on the issue of small business and taxation and regulation and how that affects our economy is the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING). I certainly welcome him to our debate tonight. I appreciate the leadership that the gentleman shows in the Committee on the Budget and in the Republican Study Committee as we work to lower taxes and spending and address appropriate regulation.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for organizing this Special Order, and I ask the gentleman from Idaho if he would pause a moment to engage in a brief colloquy with the gentleman from Idaho (Mr.

OTTER) because the gentleman holds some expertise, and that is the need to continue to build refineries in this country, crude oil refineries. Could you speak for a moment about what we expect will happen with refinery construction in this country if we pass the energy bill as it is presented.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). The gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for an additional 19 minutes.

Mr. OTTER. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to review some of the facts and figures that we have in the committee. I appreciate the gentleman's question, that is, the amount of jobs of course that would be created. I am saying high-paying professional jobs, not only for the construction phase of building a new refinery which is millions and millions of dollars, but certainly for the operation phase.

□ 2320

As we operate these refineries, we have more and more technology and we call upon these professionals for a higher degree of professionalism. As a result of that, we are not talking about some of these jobs that can simply be replaced at a moment's notice.

So one of the things that we have to do, along with the construction of the refinery, along with the potential operation of the refinery, is we have to prepare educating the chemical engineers in our colleges, and there have not been really jobs, at least in the United States that have been forthcoming because of the lack of appreciation, if you will, for the refinery business in the United States and for the gas and oil business in the United States.

A lot of these high-paying jobs have gone overseas, as well as the education opportunities. We are going to have to incentivize our education system to gear up not only for the construction of the plants but for the potential operations of them. When you look down the road at it, it has got tremendous possibilities of what it can do for our economy.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. OTTER) for his comments. I will get to some more of that subject matter of education as I go through this. I appreciate your patience with me tonight and indulgence.

I would like to first speak to the broad picture of energy across this country. There is this entire pie of energy here and different components and slices of this pie. Energy, first of all, is a component in everything that we buy. If there is any one item that adds to inflation in all the products that we purchase in this country, it is energy because it takes energy to produce anything, it takes energy to deliver anything, and it takes energy to go pick it up and buy it. So whenever we move, we are burning energy, and that is a part of the cost of everything we are. If we do not have an effective energy policy, we are paying more for all

goods and services in this country than is necessary and that means it makes us less competitive in the rest of the world. That is the big picture as to why energy is so important.

Some of the components of this energy are crude oil. We know how much energy we bring in across from the Middle East and Venezuela and other parts of the world that is imported into the United States. The crude oil cost includes also the military investment over there and the unrest and everyone, as was said earlier, the gentleman from Texas stated about every country must have their energy. Whatever it takes, we must have our energy. But we sit in this country on a significant supply of domestic crude oil. This bill puts in place the motion to construct the refineries that we need so that we can bring the crude oil in and get it refined. It also allows for us to go up to ANWR and do our drilling up there to bring that crude oil down to the lower 48.

I also have been up to ANWR to take a look at that. As I asked the people up there around the Kaktovik area, they said, yes, we have to go hunt the caribou during a certain time of the year but really the resident caribou in the drilling area are only in there from mid-May until the end of June. They come in to calve and then they leave about the end of June. That is the time when the permafrost thaws down to about a foot or 18 inches.

Nothing is going to move during that period of time except the caribou and when those young calves get old enough to walk back, they go back over to Canada out of the area, so nothing would be going on in that region when the caribou were there. It is kind of a caribou maternity ward in that part of Alaska. We need that domestic crude oil and any nation that is looking to its long-term best interests will be producing its own energy.

The concern about someday running out of crude oil, why would you keep it in the bank forever when we have other opportunities for different energy supplies that will be developed as science and technology catches up? We need to go there, get that crude oil, get it drilled, and bring it down the Alaska pipeline. By the way, the Alaska pipeline, if the North Slope oil runs out, and it looks like it is heading in that direction, that pipeline has to stay full almost all the time or it starts to erode inside the pipe, it turns to rust and it may not be able to be put back up on line. So it is important that we keep the Alaska pipeline up and going. That is a huge and valuable resource that began construction there in about 1972. It has been there a long time, it has served very, very well, and it can do a lot more. In that same region is all of the natural gas that is already developed that we do not have a good way to deliver it to the lower 48, that is the pipeline.

Yes, there are some things to work out within the State of Alaska. I hope

that gets done. We have done, I think, what we can do here, at least for now, but we need that natural gas, we need it into the Corn Belt, we need it for a lot of the reasons that the gentleman from Colorado said, and I am glad he is in here talking about corn and ethanol with regard to energy.

In the part of the country where I come from, we have constructed ethanol production to the extent that within the next 2 years, we will be able to say that we have built all of the ethanol production, all the plants that we have the corn to supply in the Fifth District in Iowa, the western third of Iowa. We have started construction now on biodiesel plants, we have two plants up and running now, we are breaking ground on a third plant that happens to be about 9 miles from where I live as the crow flies on biodiesel.

Biodiesel is coming along in the same shoes as ethanol, only a lot faster, because they have learned from the people that blazed the trail in ethanol. We are going to have, I believe, within the next 5 to 6 years, all of the biodiesel production that we will have, the soybeans and the other bioproducts to supply. That has made already this district that I represent an energy export center with the ethanol production being up to almost all we can provide and the biodiesel, we have started on it very well.

We have tremendous wind energy that has been put in place there in the last 4 to 5 years. I will say 6 to 7 years ago, we had almost no energy production, we were an energy consumption region, and today we are an energy export center. It has changed that much. It has helped a lot with our energy independence and to become less dependent on foreign energy supplies of all kinds.

But we are faced with this need for nitrogen fertilizer and almost all of our nitrogen fertilizer is made directly from natural gas, directly from natural gas. Ninety percent of the cost of that fertilizer is the cost of purchasing the gas to produce the nitrogen from it. So we sit in this country without being able to get the pipeline down from Alaska where the gas is, it is already developed, and that is a process that if all goes well could maybe get done in 6 years. It may take 9 or 10 years to get there. Yet that needs to happen and it needs to happen quickly.

But within the lower 48 States, earlier we saw the map of the layout of the natural gas, along the east coast, the west coast and the outer shelf around Florida and in the central part of the United States. One of these esteemed gentlemen has made the statement on this floor, and I am going to repeat it, and I believe it, and that is that we have enough known natural gas reserves underneath non-national park public lands in the United States of America to heat every home in America for the next 150 years. That is almost a renewable energy resource when you look at that kind of a quan-

tity. Yet natural gas is three times the price as it was just 5 and 6 years ago. Our natural gas that produces our fertilizer has done the same thing to our fertilizer prices.

People in the Corn Belt pay going into the ground with their fertilizer and then when they take that grain off the field in the fall, they have to dry the grain and most times what do they dry it with? Natural gas. So we are more susceptible to high natural gas prices than maybe any place else in the country and we have watched because of that the fertilizer production go offshore to places like Venezuela and Russia.

I remember what happened with the oil cartel in the late seventies when they shut down the oil delivery to the United States and the prices went up. We could be in that same situation with Venezuela and Russia if we let them take on any more of the fertilizer production. We need it here. We have got the gas here. We need to develop the gas. When we develop the gas, we will be able to keep our fertilizer plants. But if we do not, we will not be able to keep those plants which means we lose that fertilizer production and makes us dependent on those countries that I named. That is really critical.

We mentioned the solar energy as a component and that is going on in some of the parts of the country. Hydroelectric has been built and constructed. One of the other things I am concerned about is we have not built a nuclear plant in this country in a generation. The engineering technology that it takes to do that is leaving us year by year. That is another piece that has got to move along. We have got hydrogen around the corner and hydrogen may be the answer to much of this, but if we put all these pieces together, wind and ethanol and biodiesel and natural gas and crude oil, hydroelectric, the whole list, we have got the picture of the pieces that make us less dependent on foreign oil.

That is the picture, that is the energy bill, and that is why I support it.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentleman from Iowa for spending some time with us. He is exactly right, Madam Speaker. This is a homeland security and an economic security issue. We realize that. Competitiveness is important. We know, just as the gentleman said, we are meeting today's needs. We cannot not address the needs of today. That does require us to address oil and gas. At the same time we have to build that bridge to the future. This bill does that and does put the focus on biodiesel, biomass, ethanol, wind, hydropower, hybrid cars, hydrogen fuel cells, solar power, and all of those alternative and renewable energy sources so that we will have a goal of reducing that dependence on foreign oil.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) who is going to talk with us about the economic issues that affect his district in Texas.

□ 2330

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee for yielding to me. I very much appreciate it because this is such an important issue for all of our country, but especially for our district in East Texas. The eastern side of my district is Louisiana, and it is actually quite a help for Louisiana as well. But the things we are talking about, the resources that we have in our district include oil, gas, coal, lignite, biomass material. That could be made from things like corn maize or soy, but also from forestry material that is left over when lumber is made.

There are so many jobs that will be assisted and created. It is estimated that there could be half a million jobs created as a result of the energy bill that we are discussing here.

Some people worry about the environmental effects of an energy bill and encouraging energy production, but I want to tell the Members I am familiar with oil wells, I am familiar with gas wells, I am familiar with lignite. I was just in a couple of lignite mines in my district in the last 2 weeks, and we worry about the destruction of property, but when we see what has been done and the way the land is reclaimed and reestablished, it ends being a work of art. The hardwoods are put back. The streams are back better than ever. The hillsides, it is just beautiful what has been done. Plus the renewable resources like pine trees are there. It is a good thing for East Texas.

Of course we have heard in ANWR previously that it would destroy the caribou population. When the pipeline was going to be laid, many of us remember back in the 1970s they said it was just going to decimate the caribou. As it turned out, there were about 3,000 caribou back then. Now there are around 32,000, as it turns out, because that oil is warmed as it goes through the pipeline to keep it flowing. When caribou want to ask each other for dates, they go to the pipeline and it makes them really romantic-thinking. So it has actually increased the population there.

When people complained we should not have oil and gas wells out in the coast because it is going to destroy the fish and the teeming life in the Gulf of Mexico, it turns out after they put offshore rigs out there, that is where commercial fishermen went because that was an artificial reef and it ended up helping fishing as well.

There is so much technology that has been developed over the last 30 and 40 years that has been good for everybody.

We also have the Eastman plant, actually more in Harrison County but there by Longview, and they use natural gas to make plastic products, all kinds of products there. This will help them. It will create cheaper natural gas. If we have cheaper natural gas, the papermill that had to close down in Lufkin because they could not get

cheap enough gas; they are planning on reopening if that can happen. That just does not help Lufkin. It helps St. Augustine and Hemphill. They worked there at the paper mill. Clear up in Longview there is a man who lost 7 percent of his business when the paper mill closed all because of energy costs. These things can come back.

But not only that, we do a lot of drilling. These small business companies in East Texas, we have got the drillers themselves that go back to work. We have got land men going to work getting leases on the land. We have got the owners that are getting that lease money. We have got people that retain mineral interests getting royalties back. We have got people that are going back during the production, the service companies rehiring folks.

We have got the steel producers, companies that are renting equipment to those facilities. We have got independent drillers that are doing well. There are workers of all kinds and their families that are all having their lives made better. We have got clean coal technologies that are going to assist us and keep the air clean and make the environment just as good or better after the production of coal. There are so many good things that result for the Nation and especially for my district.

And let me just say on a personal note, with all of the things that a good energy bill will do for the Nation and do for our district, I feel good about what we are doing and I appreciate the gentlewoman's yielding to me because it does mean a lot. To take it to a very personal note, I have got three daughters. Two are away in college now, and our youngest is a junior in high school. Sarah's birthday is tomorrow, and I do not remember not being there on the morning of one of my kids' birthdays. She will be 17 tomorrow. And I hate like heck missing her birthday tomorrow, but we are going to pass us an energy bill tomorrow. And if I did not believe with all my heart that I was helping to make this country better for my children, then I would not miss Sarah's birthday tomorrow. But I think we are doing a good thing. And when I quit believing we are doing good for this country and making it better for my girls, then the voters will not have to send me home. I will go home as fast as I can.

But we are doing good, and I am proud to be a part of a majority that is working to make America better. And I thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee very much for yielding to me.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for participating with us tonight.

He is exactly right. The estimate is that 500,000 new jobs will be created over the next year by the changes made in the energy policy for this Nation.

As I close this time that I have had tonight, I do want to certainly draw some attention to provisions of the

bill, and tomorrow we hope that everyone is going to be able to talk with us and work with us as we go through the bill. And we are going to address so many things not only with our small business, but we are going to hear about electricity transmission and capability and reliability of our Nation's electricity and the electrical sources. Everyone was concerned, and we all are, when we hear of brownouts and blackouts and the series of blackouts over the past decade. So electricity is something that we will be addressing.

I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for her comments on the bill.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman very much for organizing this effort on behalf of H.R. 6, the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

As we all know, gas prices are skyrocketing, as are the costs of heating and cooling our homes. Many families and businesses are struggling under the additional financial burden.

I am encouraged we have the opportunity to tackle this issue head on and take the necessary steps to reduce the cost of energy. Hard-working Americans are depending on us to take action.

H.R. 6 will lower energy prices, strengthen the economy, generate hundreds of thousands of new jobs, and encourage greater energy conservation and efficiency. This bill will also reduce our dependence on foreign oil and encourage investment into alternative energy sources.

Furthermore, this bill will provide relief to our hard-working farmers by providing tax incentives and money for research and development for ethanol and biodiesel energy sources.

I hope all of our colleagues are going to vote for this vital piece of legislation.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her comments.

As we continue with our debate, as we were saying earlier, we will be looking at electricity, and we are going to have some provisions in this bill that the Federal Government is going to lead on energy conservation issues.

One of our colleagues talked earlier about clean coal technology and renewable sources. Those will be addressed in the bill also. And we will look forward tomorrow as we come to the floor to being able to continue our discussion and to draw attention to these issues.

OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT) is recognized for half the time until midnight.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Madam Speaker, on March 24 of this year, 30 of the prominent leading individuals in our country wrote a letter to the President about what they considered a very