

REFINERY PERMIT PROCESS
SCHEDULE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 5254, the Refinery Permit Process Schedule Act. This bill would endanger the environment and the health of communities across America in order to provide another giveaway to the oil and gas industry which is reaping record profits.

The oil industry is responsible for limiting refinery capacity. During the 1990s, the American Petroleum Institute encouraged the oil industry to limit refining capacity in order to boost profits. The industry followed instructions, closing 176 refineries since 1980 and failing to fully utilize available capacity. According to the Washington Post, between September 2004 and 2005, refineries marked up their prices 255 percent while gasoline retailers only marked up their prices by 5 percent. The five largest oil companies, many of which own refineries, reported record profits of \$110 billion in 2005. ExxonMobil reported the largest annual profit of an American company in history.

Environmental regulations are not standing in the way of new refineries being opened. The CEOs of Shell and ConocoPhillips have testified that no Federal or State regulations had prevented them from siting new refineries. Only one energy company, Arizona Clean Fuels, has filed a permit to open a new refinery in over 20 years. When Arizona Clean Fuels was granted that permit, the company never actually opened the refinery. Its inability to find investors, not environmental regulations, prevented the company from opening a refinery.

After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, refinery outages caused a supply shock that was in part responsible for a rise in gasoline prices. The Democrats, under the leadership of Representatives DINGELL, STUPAK and BOUCHER, proposed the creation of a strategic refinery reserve which would ensure that the U.S. had an adequate supply of refined product in case of national emergency. Republicans have repeatedly rejected Democrats' efforts to create that reserve, which would put the interests of consumers before the profits of the oil industry. Republicans have also rejected an attempt by Ranking Member DINGELL and Energy and Commerce Democrats to make this legislation bipartisan.

This bill is another giveaway to the oil and gas industry that could impose refineries on communities throughout the country. It requires President Bush to designate three closed military bases as sites for new refineries, waiving local and State regulations and giving communities little input in the process. It allows Secretary Rumsfeld to sell or transfer the land to an oil company at no cost. Congress should know by now that billions of dollars in giveaway to the oil and gas industry has only led to record profits and record energy prices.

This bill again demonstrates the misplaced priorities of this Republican Congress. While my constituents are paying \$2.96 for a gallon of regular gas in Chicago, we are considering

legislation that would do nothing to bring down gasoline prices. Nothing in this legislation forces oil companies to utilize all of their available refining capacity, nor does it protect our supply in the case of a national emergency. This bill will lead to higher profits in the boardroom and more pain at the pump.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MRS.
BEVERLY GARRETT**HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Beverly Garrett, a remarkable and compassionate woman whose life has touched so many Kansas Citizens. Mrs. Garrett passed away on June 1, 2006. Her passing is a deep loss felt by her family, her community, and all who have been touched by her tireless dedication and service to helping others.

Beverly was employed by the federal government in the Social Security Administration for more than thirty years. Motivated by her dedication to her work environment and fellow employees, she became active in the American Federation of Government Employees, Local 1336, in the 1980s. Her leadership, character, and determination grew with each year, eventually garnering the position of president. In addition Beverly was a member of the local AFL-CIO's Labor Council, where she proved to be a mentor and trusted friend. Beverly's commitment went beyond the work place as she found great satisfaction serving on the board of the Heart of America United Way Campaign. For two years she provided leadership and direction as Co-chair and most recently as Board Secretary.

Though she achieved positions of great trust and honor, she maintained an admirable and inspiring humility. With a touch of kindness and a touch of toughness she always found a way to create a positive impact.

Beverly's trademark was her optimistic, jovial spirit that uplifted everyone she met. Her sense of humor and quiet grace brought people together even when they were in conflict. Beverly's attitude toward life was inspiring. Always smiling, she never hesitated to go out of her way to help someone in need. Because she was devoutly religious, she always found meaning and an opportunity to learn through each experience.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in expressing our heartfelt sympathy to her sons, James and Jason, and her daughter, Kim; and all of her other relatives, loved ones, and friends. I urge my colleagues to please join me in conveying our gratitude to her family for sharing this great woman with us, and to accept our condolences for their tremendous loss. She was an inspiration to so many, and she will be missed.

STATEMENT HONORING LINWOOD
FIELDS AND THE PAGE CLASS
OF 2006**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Page Class of 2006 and in particular the page from the 30th District of Texas, Linwood Fields. You have served the United States House of Representatives with honor and dignity, and should be proud of your accomplishments.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity." It is my hope that during your time here you were able to expand your perspectives on the world, and will continue to utilize this knowledge in the years ahead.

I am particularly proud of Linwood Fields. He has honorably represented his family, my office, and the Dallas community. He successfully served this House through his outstanding work and extraordinary spirit. I know that this is merely the first step of a very bright future. I am confident that Linwood will go on to become a fine and successful man, and I look forward to seeing his accomplishments in the years to come.

I commend Linwood and the Page Class of 2006 for their outstanding service. Myself and my colleagues are grateful for all you have done.

MINE IMPROVEMENT AND NEW
EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT OF
2006

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today not in opposition to the content of the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act, but to the process by which it is brought to the floor. By bringing this important legislation to the floor as a suspension bill, members of this body are denied the opportunity to offer necessary amendments to improve the safety of miners.

A clear message was apparent when the most recent edition of the comprehensive report on workplace safety, "Death on the Job," was released in April: American workers and their families need stronger enforcement of OSHA and MSHA for their health and safety. In the first increase in the number of workplace deaths since 1994, 5,703 U.S. workers were killed on the job in 2004. The vast majority of workplace deaths occur with little national recognition or public outcry. But early this year an explosion at the Sago mine in West Virginia focused the attention of the entire Nation on 13 families waiting to hear the fate of their loved ones. Our failure to protect miners from preventable tragedies was made evident 40 hours after the explosion, when the trapped miners were reached and only one survivor was found.

Despite numerous calls for action on mine safety legislation in the Committee on Education and the Workforce, this Congress chose to do nothing to improve the safety of miners until a second tragedy—this time at a mine in Kentucky—forced action in the Senate. Now this bill is brought to the floor of the House for a vote, without any chance for members to offer amendments and improve upon the Senate's initial step. The reason offered for this rush to passage is that action is needed immediately to ensure the safety of miners. Immediate action is needed. Immediate action was needed in January, following the tragedy at Sago. Action was needed over the past 5 years as the administration withdrew or delayed action on 18 different mine safety rules. We do need to act now. But in our haste to improve safety we should take the time to ensure we do things right.

It is clear this bill will in fact improve mine safety. The Senate bill will improve the tracking and communications devices used in mines, increase penalties for noncompliance and improve mine rescue team operations. It is a good step, but we can and should do more. We should use the lessons learned from Sago and take the steps to ensure other miners do not suffer the same fate.

My colleague, Congressman MILLER, has proposed three simple and necessary amendments to this bill that would do just that. These amendments would require random testing of self-rescue devices by MSHA to ensure these vital devices are functional when needed. They would require a minimum of 2 days worth of air for trapped miners. And they would shorten to 15 months the time period for mines to install technology to track and communicate with miners underground. These are simple changes, which miners and the mine industry in West Virginia have already agreed are necessary as a part of the West Virginia Mine Safety Technology Task Force. Miners at the Sago mine and other West Virginia mines will now be protected from the problems that led to the death of those 12 miners earlier this year, not because of the bill we are debating today, but by State law. Miners across the Nation deserve and require those same protections. Passage of this bill, without such amendments, gives false hope to the families of miners in other States that a Sago-like disaster will not befall their loved ones in the future.

The core mission of MSHA is to protect workers by enforcing safety standards. These workers are not the bosses who decide if and how a business will obey the law. Instead they face the consequences of those decisions. They need strong workplace safety laws and vigorous enforcement, and that is what this Congress should be focused on providing. We do a great disservice to workers by ignoring the resources that would offer them greater protections. I urge my colleagues to consider the additional improvements we can and should make for the safety of miners across the Nation. We must refocus our time and efforts toward protecting workers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 223, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

On rollcall No. 224, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

On rollcall No. 225, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

On rollcall No. 226, had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

CONGRATULATIONS TROY McCURRY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Troy McCurry, a native of Augusta, GA, and a graduate of the University of Georgia. Throughout the past 3 years, Troy has helped me serve the Second Congressional District. From working with legislative aides on special projects to helping communicate with citizens throughout South Carolina, he has been an important part of our team. I have truly appreciated his service and his commitment.

A graduate of Catholic University Law School, Troy recently accepted a position with the Republican Governors Association. I am confident that he will bring the same level of professionalism and commitment to his new job. As Troy begins the next stage of his career, I would like to sincerely thank him for his efforts.

RETIREMENT OF TOM DELAY

HON. JOHN ABNEY CULBERSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, today marks the final day in Congress for one of the greatest leaders the House of Representatives has ever seen. In his 22 years of public service to the residents of the 22nd District of Texas, TOM DELAY has always been a tireless and indispensable warrior for the Republican party and the causes of individual freedom, family values, and limited government.

Tom's years of service have been marked by devoted adherence to core conservative principles. His effectiveness can be measured in the countless advances made under his leadership strengthening our national security, restoring individual freedoms, and reigning in a runaway federal government. Tom never backed down from his beliefs and principles, and ultimately his tremendous success made him a target. There is no doubt that the Republican Party, the conservative movement, the state of Texas, and especially the Houston area have lost the services of a great friend and leader.

I will miss having TOM DELAY serving with me in the House, but I am grateful that he has

chosen to remain active in the fight to restore the American Republic. I look forward to continuing to benefit from his invaluable counsel and wisdom.

On behalf of the Houston area and on behalf of my fellow Republican House members, congratulations to a fine leader, a great friend, and a devoted husband and father on a job well done.

FREEDOM FOR ARMANDO BETANCOURT REINA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Armando Betancourt Reina, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Betancourt Reina is an independent journalist and has been a chronicler of truth amid the lies and deceit of Castro's villainous regime. Mr. Betancourt Reina works and writes to inform the world about the nightmare that is the Castro regime. Unfortunately, writing and reporting the truth is not allowed under Castro's tyrannical dictatorship. All attempts to portray the absolute lack of freedom in totalitarian Cuba are viciously attacked and their authors are imprisoned and harassed.

According to Directorio and the Committee to Protect Journalists, Mr. Betancourt Reina was detained on May 23, 2006, in the city of Camagüey where the police were carrying out violent evictions. He was covering yet another atrocity committed by the regime against the Cuban people. In an attempt to suppress the truth about these violent evictions from the world, Castro's thugs arrested and imprisoned Mr. Betancourt Reina. Mr. Betancourt is locked in the totalitarian gulag, but he has not yet been charged with a "crime."

I remind my colleagues that, under Castro's totalitarian regime, any freedom of the press, any effort to display the atrocities of the regime under the spotlight of truth, is met with swift and violent repression.

Let me be very clear, Mr. Betancourt Reina is currently languishing in the depraved conditions of the totalitarian gulag for his truthful articles. The U.S. State Department describes the conditions in the gulag as, "harsh and life threatening." The State Department also reports that police and prison officials beat, neglect, isolate, and deny medical treatment to detainees and prisoners. It is a crime of the highest order that people are imprisoned in these nightmarish conditions simply for reporting the facts.

Mr. Betancourt Reina is a brilliant example of the heroism of the Cuban people. Despite incessant repression, harassment, incarceration and abuse, he remains committed to the conviction that freedom of the press and democracy are the inalienable right of the Cuban people. Let us never forget and always support those who are struggling to liberate people from the grip of tyranny.

Mr. Speaker, it is as inconceivable as it is unacceptable that, while the world stands by in silence and acquiescence, independent journalists who write the truth about totalitarian regimes are systematically tortured. My colleagues, we must demand the immediate and