

against the records maintained by the Social Security Administration and the Department of Homeland Security. Building on this project, H.R. 4437, the House-passed bill, would create a nationwide mandatory program. Unlike the watered-down language in the 1986 bill, the employment verification provisions in the House-passed bill offers a genuine prospect for effective employer sanctions necessary to demagnetize the attraction of unlawful employment in the U.S.

An effective employer sanctions regime, coupled with the need to fully fund the additional 2,000 Border Patrol positions authorized this year and in the out years, is essential if we are going to control illegal immigration. At the same time if we are to maximize the cooperation of employers with the implementation of an effective system of employer sanctions, it is necessary to ensure that in those cases where U.S. workers are unavailable, employers have the option of employing temporary foreign workers. Let me suggest that regulating the stream of workers which have crossed back and forth our southern border since the 1870s will facilitate the job of a larger Border Patrol and the implementation of an effective system of employer sanctions.

By definition however, in a temporary worker program, the workers should be temporary. Along the lines of an amendment I offered unsuccessfully in 1986, workers could work in the United States for up to 10 months of the year. During that time a portion of their wages could be withheld. The money would be placed in an escrow account and would only be returned to the workers upon their return to their home country—in most cases—Mexico. The proposal has a built in incentive for the temporary workers to return home to work their own small farms and to reunite with their families. In fact, Mexico and Canada have entered into a temporary agricultural worker program along these lines, which by all accounts has operated quite successfully.

Finally, we cannot avoid the issue of what we will do with those who have entered our country illegally and have settled in our communities. I certainly do not favor an amnesty. But the use of the word “amnesty” does not excuse anyone on this side of the argument from explaining exactly what they propose to do with as many as 11 million people.

By the same token, those who have violated our laws should not be allowed to cut in line in front of those who have obeyed them. A middle ground solution would allow those undocumented persons with sufficient equities in our society to remain. They could continue to work and travel back and forth between the United States and their home country. They would be legal residents, “blue card” holders if you will. However, they would not be afforded the legal equivalent of a diamond lane to citizenship. If they wish to become citizens, they would be required to return home, file an application and get in line like everyone else.

Such requirements are necessary to reassure Americans who have been turned off by the ideologically driven multicultural agenda of those groups promoting identification with the Mexican flag, an alternative national anthem, and celebration of May Day in solidarity with

leftist Mexican trade unions. It is hard for me to conceive of anything which could do more damage to the case one might make on behalf of those who demand acceptance by us to be equal partners in our society. For the common element of all immigrants who have come to this land has been a deep and burning desire to become Americans. The welcome mat extended to previous generations of immigrants was predicated upon a commitment to a common patrimony. Nothing less should be expected of those who currently seek to become a part of the tapestry of a larger tradition and history of American immigration.

ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 31, 2006, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, Members of the House, as Americans are paying over \$3 a gallon for gasoline and have been doing so for a couple of months, we see the Bush administration and Congressional Republicans running away from their record of supporting the oil and gas industry and trying to convince the public that they are deeply concerned and on the side of consumers. They even went so far as to insult the public by suggesting that they would increase the deficit and give them back a \$100 check at the end of the summer. Fortunately, the Republican leadership in the House called the idea stupid and it seems to have waned.

What the American public really wants is a comprehensive energy policy that gives them choices about their transportation, gives them choices in the heating of their homes and the cooling of their homes, gives them choices in energy conservation. That is what they are looking for, but that is not what the Republicans have delivered over the last 6 years.

Why? Because 6 years ago, Vice President CHENEY sat down with the executives of the oil companies and made a decision that they would put the oil companies in charge of America's energy policy. They would put the oil companies in charge of whether or not we would have innovation, whether or not we would have new technologies, whether or not we would have alternative energies such as solar, biofuels and all the rest of that. And the oil companies basically decided we would keep doing business on our energy policy as we have since the 1950s and 1960s, that is, we would just let the oil companies continue to drill.

That meeting with Mr. CHENEY made it very, very profitable for the oil companies because since that time the Congress has done nothing but lavish tax breaks on the oil and gas industry. The policy seems to have worked because when you look at the profits, they have gone through the roof. Chevron netted \$4 billion in 3 months. That is a profit of \$44 million a day. But they look like

a small business alongside of ExxonMobil which reported a profit of \$8.4 billion, and that is after they gave the CEO of ExxonMobil a \$400 million pay package. And they were still able to get a profit into the billions. I bet they loved being in that meeting with Mr. CHENEY where they got the rights to do all this.

So Congress has continued to lavish tens of billions of dollars of tax breaks on the industry, income tax deductions for Humvee purchases, opening the California coast and other protected places for oil exploration, liability protection for the oil industry against MTBE contamination of cities' drinking waters that is occurring all over the country, and, finally, a royalty holiday, treating the oil companies like royalty. They won't have to pay the United States taxpayers for the right to drill oil on those lands that are owned by the taxpayer. They will get a royalty holiday. But, of course, today, now the Republican leadership is running around and the President has said that a royalty holiday makes no sense when oil is at \$70 a barrel. He actually said it when it was at \$50 a barrel. It makes no sense at \$50 a barrel, it makes no sense at \$60 a barrel, and it makes no sense at \$70 a barrel. But the fact of the matter is we don't see one step being taken in this Congress to end that royalty holiday and end it today and give that money back to the taxpayers and reduce the deficit.

No, what the Republicans ought to do is they ought to check their voting record and see how voted this last year when our colleague from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) offered that amendment in April, 2005, to make sure that we would get rid of the royalty holiday. But it didn't pass. It didn't pass because that is not on the oil companies' agenda. And as we now know, the oil companies are running the agenda for this Congress.

The Democrats have a better idea. We believe that working together across all of the talents of America, that we can provide energy independence within 10 years. But to do so you would have to dramatically encourage new technologies, alternative forms of transportation, of mass transportation, the use of solar, the use of biofuels, the use of these kinds of conservation efforts combined with new fuels and new technologies to let America be independent, to make choices about its energy future.

Today, the President of the United States walks hand in hand with the Sheik from Saudi Arabia and that is our energy policy: Don't do anything to upset the Saudis.

The fact of the matter is we have to take control of our energy policy. But we will only do that when we break the link between the Republican Party and the oil and gas industry in this country. We will only have the chance to bring new forms of transportation online, to bring solar energy at a much more affordable price for American

consumers, to bring alternative fuel sources online at a more affordable price, to break our dependency on Middle East oil. As our leader said over the weekend on Meet the Press, we want to send our money to the middle west to develop biofuels, to develop switch fuels, to develop syn fuels, to develop ethanol. That is what we want to do, instead of sending our money to the Middle East where it is being used for very dubious purposes in terms of the interests of this country.

But this administration to date has not broken its alliance with the oil sheiks in the Middle East and has not broken its alliance with the oil industry in this country. And Americans today continue to drive to work paying over \$3 a gallon for gas with no respite in the future because of the absence, the abandonment of this country by this administration for an energy policy that works to the benefit of America's consumers.

WORKING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS RISING ENERGY PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 31, 2006, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise today because we must find ways to effectively address the rising gas prices the citizens of the Nation are paying at the pump.

Last week the House passed new legislation to address price gouging at the pump and set Federal penalties for price manipulation. The major oil companies say there are many factors in gas pricing, including basic economics of supply and demand, the switch to ethanol from MTBE as a clean fuel additive, and lack of refining capacity, among others, and that they have no control over the spiking gas prices.

But my constituents, especially working people raising families and those on fixed incomes whose wallets are being pinched tighter and tighter, tell me they are not satisfied with those answers.

Madam Speaker, it is time for the President to use the bully pulpit to get to the bottom of this issue the way that Teddy Roosevelt did. He should call to the Oval Office every chief executive of the major oil companies and let them explain to the American people why the average price for a gallon of unleaded gasoline in the United States today is nearly \$3, and in some areas at least a dime over that.

There is another area of the energy market that also needs attention. Recent news accounts have theorized that the commodity futures trading market could be partly responsible for the rapid jumps in gasoline prices over the past couple of months. This past weekend, television investigative reports pointed to the energy trading industry as an area in need of investigation to see if fraud or manipulation is occur-

ring. I learned yesterday that bipartisan legislation was introduced in the Senate on this matter. Senators FEINSTEIN and SNOWE have a bill that would increase transparency and accountability in the energy markets.

Madam Speaker, according to our colleagues, energy trades are often made using an electronic trading platform where no records are kept, so there is no audit trail for the Government to monitor. Currently, most energy exchanges occur on the New York Mercantile Exchange or on electronic exchanges such as the InterContinental Exchange. I was surprised to learn that while the New York Mercantile Exchange is regulated by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the electronic exchanges like the InterContinental Exchange are largely unregulated, even though it is estimated that up to 80 percent of our energy commodities are traded on the InterContinental Exchange. Under CFTC regulations, traders using the New York Mercantile Exchange must keep records for 5 years and report large trading positions to the commission. But traders using the InterContinental Exchange keep no records. Additionally, traders using the New York exchange are subject to other Federal regulations, like limits on how much of a given commodity can be traded in one day. Traders using the InterContinental Exchange are not.

Where is the transparency? Where is the accountability? Who are these speculators? The American people need to know their government is leaving no stone unturned in investigating this issue. After Hurricane Katrina, we saw prices jump. Many Americans certainly understood Katrina's wrath, but there were questions raised then about the almost overnight jump of gasoline prices. To find out if indeed there was gouging at the pump, this Congress ordered an investigation in last year's commerce spending bill. The FTC will report on May 22.

Can markets really be manipulated? Think back to the electricity market manipulation by Enron. As a result, last year's energy bill gave more authority to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in the regulation of natural gas and electricity markets including more transparency.

In closing, there is no similar process for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission in the unregulated energy markets. Who is to say whether investment firms, commercial bankers or hedge funds could actually be driving up oil prices through futures trading?

Madam Speaker, as I mentioned at the beginning, a good place to start would be for the President to have an Oval Office chat with the big oil executives. It would also be important to have the heads of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Chris Cox, our former colleague who is running the SEC; and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission in that meeting.

We owe it to our constituents to find the answers, to bring everybody to-

gether. And so I urge the administration to do exactly what Teddy Roosevelt would have done, bring all the parties together to hammer this out, look at all of the trading to show and demonstrate we are doing everything we can to get to the bottom of this to begin to reduce these prices.

ON NATURAL DISASTERS AND GLOBAL WARMING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 31, 2006, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, beyond the day's headlines of crimes, scandal and foreign affairs, there are still stories of flooding, fire, hurricanes, tornadoes and mudslides still in the news. They are much on the minds of the American public. After years in local government and in Congress, I share their concerns about these threats that we face from natural disasters, how we make these threats worse by what we do, and how we learn little from our experience. Mostly I wonder what it will take to provoke a coordinated, thoughtful response from the Federal Government to the challenges posed by natural disasters.

For years before Katrina, I had been discussing on this floor what was likely to happen in New Orleans when the "big one" hit. My concerns became more urgent as I witnessed firsthand the devastation in Asia from the tsunami.

It is not like we don't know what to do to protect our constituents. After the floods in the upper Mississippi River, FEMA in the Clinton Administration, under the leadership of James Lee Witt, took a coordinated approach with the natural environment, forming partnerships with private companies, landowners and local governments to dramatically reduce the damage in subsequent floods. We took similar actions in Portland, Oregon. We know what works.

After years of struggle, Congress is finally reforming the flood insurance program to stop encouraging people to live in harm's way, to reduce the damage by building smarter, or moving families to safer, higher ground. For years we have been sponsoring round table discussions with experts on coordinated policy response in all of these elements, from fire and earthquake to flooding. People are ready to support legislation introduced before Katrina, to provide resources for communities to plan to avoid disaster.

There are national and local visionaries ready to develop a comprehensive response to Katrina throughout the gulf region so that we are ready for the next inevitable round of hurricanes. But what will it take for people to act on the discussion, the plans, the legislation, to get real action?

What about the Federal Government? Will it take the next disaster season to