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TAX CUTS FOR THE WEALTHY

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, well, it is a big day inside the Beltway here, the long-anticipated Republican tax cuts are here, the fifth of the Bush Presidency. You would think with huge deficits maybe they would reconsider; but no, they are plowing ahead. Tonight, rivers of champagne will flow in corporate board rooms across America.

Under this bill, we will borrow \$70 billion and immediately give \$50 billion of it to wealthy investors. We will borrow \$70 billion and give \$50 billion to wealthy investors in big tax breaks to those who clip coupons off dividend-paying stocks and capital gains.

A person who earns \$40,000 a year, they might get a \$20 break under this bill. But those who earn \$5 million, \$82,000 off their tax bill. It is a great country. Yet Republicans couldn't find room in this bill for a tuition tax deduction. They had to bump that out. You know, these are tough times, people have to sacrifice; not the people in the board rooms and not the wealthy investors, but middle class America who want their kids to get an education. They couldn't fit it in the bill.

They are discriminating against wages and salary earners and favoring the investors with lower tax breaks. They are borrowing money and handing the bill to people who work for wages and salaries. I don't think that it is that they really hate wage and salary earners, they just favor the wealthy who fund their campaigns.

TACKLING THE NATION'S ENERGY POLICIES

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

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, the high gas prices and energy costs that we are experiencing now demonstrate more than ever we have to increase the urgency of achieving U.S. oil independence from foreign sources of oil. Congress needs to work faster to develop new fuel choices and achieve fuel savings.

I am a cosponsor of the Fuel Choices for American Security Act. Our legislation initiates a plan to achieve U.S. oil savings of 2.5 million barrels per day by 2015. That is the amount of oil we currently import from the Middle East every day.

Our plan is committed to developing alternative energy courses and renewable fuels. It will create better market incentives to use the resources and technology already available here in America to develop new fuel choices and bring them to consumers faster.

As long as the U.S. dependence on foreign oil continues to increase, gas prices will continue to increase as well.

Looking backward and using high gas prices to launch political attacks gives us no solution to the Nation's energy problems. Political maneuvers are not an energy policy. Looking forward by passing this bipartisan legislation is the correct approach to implementing the initiatives we need to tackle the Nation's energy problems. Let us commit ourselves to the American consumer and not to politics.

AMT BECOMES ATM

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, nothing spells out the political cynicism and misplaced Republican priorities better than the tax bill we are about to vote upon. More assistance to the people in the top one-tenth of a percent whose burden has actually fallen 25 percent since Bush took office, the over-million-dollar crowd will get an additional \$40,000 a year for the next 10 years.

But the Republican leadership and the Bush administration is playing Russian roulette with the alternative minimum tax and the 15.3 million families whose only sin is to pay taxes, pay their mortgage and raise their families. Every year more of them fall into a trap, and each year the Republican leadership fails to make a long-term fix a priority. They would rather play politics with the favored few.

This misguided priority is shameful, as Medicare and Medicaid deficits widen and the national debt increases. The alternative minimum tax, the AMT, has become an ATM to finance more tax cuts for people who need it least and put at risk 33 million American families who will fall into the AMT tax trap by 2010 when the house of cards comes crashing down.

AL QAEDA DISORGANIZATION

(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, earlier this week the Associated Press reported from Baghdad that recently discovered al Qaeda and Iraq documents demonstrate that the terrorists are "concerned about disorganization within their cells in the capital area, with one extremist describing them as simply a 'daily annoyance' to the Iraqi government."

In one document, a terrorist complains that "the Americans and the

Iraqi government forces 'were able to absorb our painful blows,' raise new recruits and 'take control of Baghdad as well as other areas, one after the other.'

Another terrorist complained about "the strength of brothers in Baghdad and is based mostly on car bombs and groups of assassins lacking any organized military capabilities."

These documents demonstrate that courageous American troops and Iraqi security forces are breaking the will of the terrorists in Iraq to protect American families.

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

GAS PRICES DIRECT RESULT OF FAILED POLICIES

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today's record gas prices are the direct result of 5 years of failed policies by the Bush administration and this Republican Congress.

We seem to be more interested in giving still more tax breaks to oil executives than providing real relief to American consumers. Rather than proposing policies that would aggressively confront our energy challenges, Republicans are once again pushing to drill in ANWR. They neglect to say that drilling in ANWR would not be possible for another decade and would only provide about 6 months of oil for the American consumer.

House Republicans are also suggesting waiving environmental laws to encourage new refinery construction. But all of the major oil companies have already testified that environmental laws are not what is preventing them from building more refineries. It is more personally profitable to pay out lower-taxed-dividends than invest retained earnings in refineries.

So along with the silly \$100 rebate, this is another proposal from House Republicans that will do nothing to reduce prices at the pump today. But the American consumer is beginning to realize it is time to try something new. It is time for a change in leadership.

□ 1015

MEXICO HARSHER ON ILLEGALS THAN U.S.

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

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, last week, street protests revealed a lot about the hypocrisy of Mexico. With a great deal of bluster and self-righteousness, the protestors objected to the House-approved border security bill.

They said it was "too harsh."

They said it was "draconian."

They said we shouldn't criminalize 11 million illegal immigrants.

They said we should, instead, give them amnesty and citizenship.

They waved their Mexican flags with great pride.

Well, a new study just released by the Law Library of Congress, reveals that Mexico itself is far harsher on illegal immigrants than the United States. For example, in Mexico, it is a felony punishable by 2 years in prison merely to be an illegal immigrant. In contrast to giving them citizenship, Mexico actually deported 250,000 illegal immigrants last year. Mexico even put their military soldiers on their southern border to stop illegals from going into Mexico from Guatemala.

Hypocrisy has crossed the border. It makes you wonder, were they protesting the wrong country last week?

ALLOW A VOTE ON THE PUMP ACT

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, this weekend I held four town hall meetings in my vast rural northern Michigan district. I put on over 700 miles as I traveled from small town to small town to meet with my constituents. The number one concern of my constituents was the extremely high price of gasoline.

My constituents can't afford to drive the distances necessary to go to and from work. My constituents know they cannot afford the \$50 to fill their gas tank. My constituents know that my PUMP legislation, Prevent Unfair Manipulating of Prices, would end the speculation in the pricing of a barrel of oil. My constituents know the legislation would reduce the cost of a barrel of oil by \$20 and would lower the cost of the gas at the pump by one-third.

We could do that today.

My constituents also know that President Bush and the rubber-stamp Republican-controlled Congress will not allow a vote on my legislation.

Mr. Speaker, let's lower gas prices today. Let's lower it by bringing forward the PUMP legislation for a vote in this House, and do the people's work instead of the oil companies' work.

PROGRESS BEING MADE IN IRAQ

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, this weekend I had the privilege of leading a delegation of Republicans and Democrats to Operation Iraqi Freedom, and despite what you see on television, there is a lot of good news in Iraq, thanks to American and coalition forces and the good people of Iraq.

We were in Mosul, the ancient site of the city of Nineva. And where Mosul, over a year ago, was inflamed with insurgent violence, today Mosul is secure, thanks to the 101st Airborne, but

also thanks to a local Iraqi police chief who is leading 1,500 Iraqi police into the streets daily to capture insurgents.

We also met with the new Prime Minister, Nuri al-Maliki, who told us of his plans to appoint a cabinet maybe as soon as this week, a clear agenda for stabilizing his country. He greeted us with the words, "Welcome to a new Iraq."

It will be our hope and our prayer that the American people will stand with the good people of Iraq to see freedom's fruition in that ancient land.

NURSE LOAN FORGIVENESS ACT OF 2006

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, our country is facing an increasing nursing shortage. Currently, in California, we are one of the 30 States that faces significant shortages in full-time registered nurses. But by the year 2020, 44 States are expected to have significant nurse shortages. We are going to need more than 400,000 new nurses nationwide.

We need to take immediate action to recruit and retain nurses for our Nation's medical facilities and address this critical shortage.

Today I am introducing the Nurse Loan Forgiveness Act of 2006. This bill will help recruit and retain more nurses by providing financial incentives for students to enroll in and complete nursing programs. It would forgive up to \$17,000 in Federal loans over a 5-year period for people who have been working for at least a year as a full-time registered nurse.

It is time for us to take action and to address this ongoing nursing shortage. I urge my colleagues to help me and cosponsor this bill.

LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, GENEROSITY

(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, I rise today to recognize the wonderful generosity of the people of my district, the Pennsylvania 16th. This generosity has been on full display in the aftermath of the hurricanes that hit our gulf coast last year.

The small Mississippi town of Pass Christian is roughly 1,200 miles from Lancaster County, but this hasn't stopped the people of Lancaster County, including many of the Amish community, from providing an outpouring of volunteer help to this devastated gulf coast town.

Organized through a group called Community Aid Relief Effort, dozens of Lancaster County residents have been traveling to the gulf coast every week since Katrina to help out with what-

ever was needed, and the results are showing. Debris has been cleared, damaged homes are being repaired and new homes are being built.

Mr. Speaker, while this outpouring of compassion warms my heart, it doesn't surprise me. The people of Lancaster County have a long tradition of helping those in need, and this is just the most recent example. I honor their efforts.

TAX POLICY BENEFITING TOP 1 PERCENT OF AMERICANS

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, some people say this is a do-nothing Congress. They are wrong. This is the rubber-stamp Congress. Every Member of the Republican side is right now looking through his office for where is his rubber stamp, because this is one of the days when they come over here and rubber-stamp the President's tax cuts.

The 13th page of the New York Times today carries the fact that the tax cut for the top 10 percent, 82 percent of the \$69 billion goes to the top 10 percent.

Now, that is not do-nothing, that is just forgetting the other 90 percent in this country. And when a decent period has passed by, they are going to come out here and raise the debt limit again. That is in the paper today as well. They raised it in March, and they have given so much away and dug us so deep in debt that they are going to be out here doing it again.

There is nothing in what we will do today that is useful for anybody who is at the middle class or below. This is all for the top 10 percent. That is all these people are for. The time is coming for change in November.

CONTINUED TAX RELIEF NECESSARY

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the evidence is crystal clear: 32 straight months of job growth, 5.3 million new jobs created since August of 2003, the stock market within sight of a record high and homeownership at an all-time high. These are all good things.

So how should we keep the good things going? Continue the policies that brought them about. The House should ensure that we build on this success by supporting the tax conference report. Positive action today will prevent, prevent, a tax hike on millions of hardworking American families and small businesses that would greatly harm our economy.

By extending the reduced rates on capital gains and dividends, all Americans, all Americans, will be able to plan for the future with a greater sense of stability.