

Mr. Speaker, you are telling me, this report tells me that the Border Patrol can stop 2 pounds of pork in a diaper from entering this country, but we can't stop \$58 billion worth of illegal drugs and half a million illegals crossing the border each year?

This is crazy. We must fix this problem before people start smuggling themselves in diapers.

ENERGY POLICY IN AMERICA

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to America's energy policy, which takes from the working class Americans and rewards rich oil companies. Under President Bush's plan more than \$20 billion has been waived in royalty fees and more than \$5 billion in giveaways to big oil-producing corporations.

Legislation considered by this body last week targeted our States and our communities as the culprits of high gas prices, rather than pointing a finger at oil companies who made more than \$110 billion in profits in 2005 and \$16 billion in the first 3 months of 2006.

But we know better. Just yesterday, the Environmental Council of States stated that they were not aware of any credible report that our States are denying or lagging behind on permitting of new refineries and the expansion of existing refineries. Documentation to the contrary has not been presented to our committee, Energy and Commerce Committee.

Rather than take on wealthy oil company executives, this administration and this body continue to delay real action to help working class families and small businesses.

I hope that we can resolve this issue soon.

MEDICARE ENROLLMENT

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on December 8, 2003, President Bush signed the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act of 2003 into law. While I may have a few differences with certain aspects of this legislation, we have come a long way since the bill first became law.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have made great strides to make this implementation process as painless as possible. The first enrollment period for Medicare part D will end in just 5 days.

Over 27 million seniors across America now have coverage and are saving money on their prescription drugs. Currently, the State of South Carolina has over 438,000 people with prescription drug coverage. Almost 80,000 of those seniors are living in my district.

As the enrollment deadline of May 15 nears, I urge my constituents to call 1-

800-MEDICARE with any questions. It is important to take an active roll in managing your own health care.

CONGRESS SHOULD EXTEND THE MAY 15 DEADLINE ON THE MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the pharmaceutical industry influenced the passage of a Medicare prescription drug plan last year. It is not great, it is just all we got. The deadline is May 15 for seniors to enroll in this program.

If seniors are not enrolled in 5 days, they will face a financial penalty each month for the rest of their lives. Since it took effect at the beginning of this year, the logical problems of implementing this plan have proved enormous. Seniors across the Nation have complained about the confusing number of plans to choose from and the change in prescription benefits each offers.

Research has shown that many of those who contact the Federal Government for help receive incorrect information or no information at all. It is no surprise then that millions of seniors have yet to select a drug plan.

Now with only 5 days to select the right plan or face a steep penalty, these seniors find themselves under pressure to make the best decision for their health and their pocketbook.

Mr. Speaker, serious health decisions require time and information. Our seniors deserve more.

MEDICARE PART D

(Ms. HART asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call for a stop to the misleading and dishonest rhetoric from some political circles that has been used to purposefully scare seniors regarding the new prescription drug program that is available through Medicare. These hollow claims that it is too expensive for seniors or doesn't provide good coverage have been repeated by groups across the country.

These couldn't be farther from the truth. By every true measure, the new program is succeeding in its core mission of helping Medicare patients save money on their prescription drugs. Participation in the program has now exceeded its goal of enrolling 30 million by the conclusion of the first year, and it is only May.

In addition, since the beginning of March of this year, seniors have been enrolling in the prescription drug plan at the average rate of 416,000 seniors per week.

The overwhelming reason that so many Medicare recipients have now enrolled is simple. They are seeing real savings on the cost of their prescrip-

tion drugs. The average senior who signs up for a plan will save more than \$1,100 on their prescription drugs this year and low income seniors projected to save about \$3,700; the average premium, only \$25. Some in my State are paying just over \$10.

Mr. Speaker, with so little time left to enroll, I encourage my colleagues help seniors enroll, not scare them.

FIVE DAYS FOR REPUBLICANS TO REJECT BUSH PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAX ON SENIORS

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, we must stand up for America's seniors. As this calendar shows, House Republicans have less than 1 week, only 5 days left to join Democrats in extending the period seniors have to sign up for private prescription drug plans. If this Congress refuses to act, millions of American seniors who have yet to choose a plan will be penalized with the Bush prescription drug tax that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. The Bush administration is trying to force American seniors to make a decision that will impact both their checkbooks and their health in the next 5 days.

Five million seniors have still not chosen a drug plan. But the Bush administration wants to scare all of these seniors into choosing a plan before May 15, regardless of whether or not they are comfortable or ready to sign up for a plan.

Mr. Speaker, it is time House Republicans declare independence from the White House. As we mark off another day, House Republicans must join us in taking action this week.

THE DEMOCRATS TRIED ON MEDICARE

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, you can't say the Democrats haven't tried their hardest. When it comes to the Medicare prescription drug benefit, they have complained, criticized and have held town hall meetings to encourage seniors not to sign up. Luckily for America's seniors, they have decided to listen to the facts instead of the negative spin.

Recently the Department of Health and Human Services reported that more than 30 million Medicare beneficiaries are now getting coverage and saving money on their prescription drugs. This surpasses their expectations of 28 to 30 million enrollees in the first year. I suppose adding to the Democrats' frustration are recent polls showing broad support for the new benefit, as well as amazing success stories of seniors who are now reaping big savings in their prescription drug costs.

For example, a recent AARP poll revealed that nearly 8 in 10, that is nearly 78 percent of those enrolled in a Medicare prescription drug plan, say the new benefit is either meeting or exceeding their expectations.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps if the Democrats put as much effort into encouraging, rather than discouraging seniors, we would have enrolled 30 million much sooner.

ENERGY CRISIS AND PRICES IN AMERICA

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, in San Diego, the average price of regular unleaded gasoline is \$3.43 a gallon, highlighting the expanding energy crisis in the country and fueling the frustration of many Americans. It is quite clear that the energy policies of President Bush and the Republican majority have failed.

The American people want Congress to come together and fix this crisis. House Democrats are energized in providing quick relief and long-term solutions. Democrats want to provide quick relief by expanding the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and expanding tax credits and grants to small businesses. We do this by repealing the \$8 billion in Federal giveaways Republicans dished out to the oil and gas companies.

Democrats are committed to funding groundbreaking research and new technologies so that we can be independent of foreign oil by the year 2020. The energy policy of this administration and this majority is draining the wallets of Americans. It is time we implement a comprehensive energy policy that helps consumers and emphasizes alternate renewable energy.

MONSIGNOR EMILIO VALLINA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Reverend Monsignor Emilio Vallina in celebration of his 54 years of service. As a servant of God, he has truly made a difference in the San Juan Bosco Church community in my congressional district of Miami, Florida.

San Juan Bosco Church is fortunate to have an individual who gives so generously of his time and energy to improve our area. It is the perseverance and compassion of people like Monsignor Vallina that help in the development of a stronger south Florida.

After fleeing the tyrannical Castro regime in 1961, Monsignor Emilio has dedicated himself to the teaching and the practice of the Catholic doctrine. His church in East Little Havana welcomes the poor immigrants, the homeless and the lonely.

Monsignor Emilio Vallina deserves commendation for his hard work and his continuous effort to improve the welfare of our community. May God continue to bless you, my friend, Monsignor Emilio Vallina.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

RECORD votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

H-PRIZE ACT OF 2006

Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5143) to authorize the Secretary of Energy to establish monetary prizes for achievements in overcoming scientific and technical barriers associated with hydrogen energy, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5143

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "H-Prize Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTERING ENTITY.—The term "administering entity" means the entity with which the Secretary enters into an agreement under section 3(c).

(2) DEPARTMENT.—The term "Department" means the Department of Energy.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Energy.

SEC. 3. PRIZE AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to competitively award cash prizes only in conformity with this Act to advance the research, development, demonstration, and commercial application of hydrogen energy technologies.

(b) ADVERTISING AND SOLICITATION OF COMPETITORS.—

(1) ADVERTISING.—The Secretary shall widely advertise prize competitions to encourage broad participation, including by individuals, universities (including historically Black colleges and universities and other minority serving institutions), and large and small businesses (including businesses owned or controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged persons).

(2) ANNOUNCEMENT THROUGH FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE.—The Secretary shall announce each prize competition by publishing a notice in the Federal Register. This notice shall include the subject of the competition, the duration of the competition, the eligibility requirements for participation in the competition, the process for participants to register for the competition, the amount of the prize, and the criteria for awarding the prize.

(c) ADMINISTERING THE COMPETITIONS.—The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with a private, nonprofit entity to administer the prize competitions, subject to the provisions

of this Act. The duties of the administering entity under the agreement shall include—

(1) advertising prize competitions and their results;

(2) raising funds from private entities and individuals to pay for administrative costs and to contribute to cash prizes;

(3) working with the Secretary to develop the criteria for selecting winners in prize competitions, based on goals provided by the Secretary;

(4) determining, in consultation with the Secretary, the appropriate amount for each prize to be awarded;

(5) selecting judges in accordance with section 4(d), using criteria developed in consultation with the Secretary; and

(6) preventing the unauthorized use or disclosure of a registered participant's intellectual property, trade secrets, and confidential business information.

(d) FUNDING SOURCES.—Prizes under this Act shall consist of Federal appropriated funds and any funds provided by the administering entity (including funds raised pursuant to subsection (c)(2)) for such cash prizes. The Secretary may not give any special consideration to any private sector entity or individual in return for a donation to the administering entity.

(e) ANNOUNCEMENT OF PRIZES.—The Secretary may not issue a notice required by subsection (b)(2) until all the funds needed to pay out the announced amount of the prize have been appropriated or committed in writing by the administering entity. The Secretary may increase the amount of a prize after an initial announcement is made under subsection (b)(2) if—

(1) notice of the increase is provided in the same manner as the initial notice of the prize; and

(2) the funds needed to pay out the announced amount of the increase have been appropriated or committed in writing by the administering entity.

(f) SUNSET.—The authority to announce prize competitions under this Act shall terminate on September 30, 2017.

SEC. 4. PRIZE CATEGORIES.

(a) CATEGORIES.—The Secretary shall establish prizes for—

(1) advancements in components or systems related to—

- (A) hydrogen production;
- (B) hydrogen storage;
- (C) hydrogen distribution; and
- (D) hydrogen utilization;

(2) prototypes of hydrogen-powered vehicles or other hydrogen-based products that best meet or exceed objective performance criteria, such as completion of a race over a certain distance or terrain or generation of energy at certain levels of efficiency; and

(3) transformational changes in technologies for the distribution or production of hydrogen that meet or exceed far-reaching objective criteria, which shall include minimal carbon emissions and which may include cost criteria designed to facilitate the eventual market success of a winning technology.

(b) AWARDS.—

(1) ADVANCEMENTS.—To the extent permitted under section 3(e), the prizes authorized under subsection (a)(1) shall be awarded biennially to the most significant advance made in each of the four subcategories described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (a)(1) since the submission deadline of the previous prize competition in the same category under subsection (a)(1) or the date of enactment of this Act, whichever is later, unless no such advance is significant enough to merit an award. No one such prize may exceed \$1,000,000. If less than \$4,000,000 is