

countries. By singling out oil and gas companies and raising their taxes, H.R. 6 will have the effect of encouraging them to expand production overseas, limit U.S. investment, and cut their American workforce.

Another source of concern is the millions of Americans who invest their pension and retirement savings in the oil and gas sector. Many State and local pension funds, as well as individual stockholders, invest in these companies. Retirees and investors depending on high performing stocks will likely be negatively impacted by Congress's decision to single out this sector.

I am also concerned that H.R. 6 will force companies who signed leases with the Federal Government in 1988 and 1999 for drilling rights in the Gulf of Mexico to renegotiate the terms of the contracts they signed. Under the Clinton administration, the Department of Interior failed to insert a clause in these contracts that would require firms to pay royalty fees when the price of oil exceeded a certain amount. Now, realizing the mistake, the Government has begun to renegotiate the leases on a voluntary basis with the affected companies. Some of them have agreed to begin paying royalty fees while others have not. The Government should continue to voluntarily negotiate with these firms. But, for the Government to force companies to pay new, higher fees as a penalty for not renegotiating legitimate contracts seems akin to what a Russian, Venezuelan, or Bolivian government would do.

As a sponsor of legislation to expand tax incentives for solar energy and hybrid vehicles, I am committed to the improvement of energy conservation and new technologies. Reducing oil and gas consumption is important, but I do not believe H.R. 6 is not the right policy for achieving this objective. I urge my colleagues to resist policies like H.R. 6 that arbitrarily penalize American oil and gas companies and practically incentivize them to move operations overseas.

#### COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 17, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, the cost of college education continues to rise at an alarming rate. You may ask, "why does it matter?" The simple fact is that education is the single most important factor when it comes to equalizing opportunity and ensuring all students are able to achieve a better future and, of course, greater income. A well educated society is paramount to our global competitiveness and national security. Because education is so critical, I believe we have a duty to ensure it is available to all our citizens. The legislation before us represents an opportunity to assist borrowers with repayment of their student loan debt—a debt that is an investment in their future. While I support that goal, I also urge my colleagues to dig deeper into the problem, and take a hard look at the problem of rising tuition costs. After all, the debt incurred by students is the costs incurred to participate in postsecondary education. I would like to see us engage in a dia-

logue with the higher education community to understand why college costs are rising so rapidly and what can be done to assist students who are struggling to even enroll because the cost barrier is too high.

I would also like to speak for a moment about the cost of this proposal. I fully support a fiscally responsible approach, and our newly reinstated PAYGO rules demand that we offset the cost of this proposal. As such, this bill is being paid for through reductions in government payments to the private and non-profit lenders and guarantee agencies that provide student loans. I have some concerns about how the cost of this bill may affect student benefit programs now available. We need to invest in education and we all need to take a hard look at the programs now available to ensure they are efficient and effective. However, we must not lose sight of the strengths inherent in our current system. Students and families benefit greatly from solid competition within the student loan program, which today results in reduced fees, repayment incentives, and yes, lower interest rates. But there is more: student outreach, need-based scholarship programs and services, statewide career testing for 7th through 12th grades—all of which are helping to make college more affordable and accessible. We shouldn't neglect that. As we proceed with this and other higher education legislation, I want to protect students and families from a one-size-fits-all mentality and ensure these programs that have served so many will go forward in an efficient manner for the students and families they serve, as well as for the American taxpayers making this crucial investment.

I thank Speaker PELOSI and the Chairman of the Education and Labor Committee for including higher education in the First 100 Hours. It shows how important the issue is and that this Congress is committed to moving forward with an investment in our students and an investment in the future of our Nation.

#### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND UNITED STATES TERRITORIES CIRCULATING QUARTER DOLLAR PROGRAM ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 23, 2007*

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 392, which requires the Circulating Quarter Dollar Coin Program to honor the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Madam Speaker, you will recall that in 1999, the United States Mint began circulating quarters in commemoration of each of the 50 States. The coin honoring my great State of Texas was issued in 2004. The coin, featuring the Lone Star of Texas, is the 28th in the series and commemorates Texas' admission to the Union as the 28th State on December 29, 1845.

To date, Mr. Speaker, 40 of the 50 State coins have been circulated. I look forward to seeing the last 10 States honored with their own special quarter-dollar coin.

Unfortunately, the beautiful city in which we stand today, our Nation's capital, has been thus far denied the opportunity to commemorate its vital importance as a part of our union, with a quarter-dollar coin of its own. Likewise, the United States territories have not had the opportunity to commemorate their important role in our nation. H.R. 392 would change this regrettable state of affairs.

I thank the delegate from the District of Columbia, Ms. NORTON, for introducing this legislation and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of it. I am, however, saddened that she herself cannot cast a vote in favor of this bill since she is not yet permitted a vote on the floor of the House or in the Committee of the Whole. I am optimistic that the new Democratic majority in this House will grant elected delegates the right to vote in the Committee of the Whole at the earliest possible opportunity. I remain a strong supporter of H.R. 328, the District of Columbia Fair and Equal Voting Rights Act of 2007, which will give the representative for the District of Columbia a full, fair, and equal vote on the floor of the House of Representatives.

As a supporter of freedom, democracy, and equality, I believe that it is long overdue for the citizens of the District of Columbia to have a representative in Congress who can vote on the vital legislation considered in this august body. It is wrong, Madam Speaker, that the citizens of the District of Columbia, who after all pay taxes to the United States, serve in the Armed Forces, and are subject to the laws and jurisdiction of the United States, are denied a vote in the body that imposes those taxes, raises and maintains the Armed Forces, and makes the laws that each of us must obey. Similarly, we cannot deny the territories of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands the right to have a vote in Congress. Doing so denies the important relationships of these territories to our Nation and diminishes the contributions of their people to our country.

In light of this unfortunate situation, I commend the delegate from our Nation's Capital for introducing H.R. 392, to show the people of the United States capital and territories that we do indeed honor them. I urge my colleagues to pay tribute to them by voting in favor of this legislation to establish a quarter dollar coin program in their commemoration.

#### RETIREMENT OF SUPERVISOR ILLA COLLIN

**HON. DORIS O. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 24, 2007*

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise in tribute to Sacramento County Supervisor Illa Collin and her esteemed career. Supervisor Collin built a lasting legacy in Sacramento County and her presence on the board of supervisors will be deeply missed. As her friends, family and coworkers all gather to celebrate her career, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the dedicated service of one of Sacramento's finest leaders.

Illia Collin was first elected to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors in 1978. She immediately made her presence known by tirelessly working to strengthen neighborhoods and revitalize urban corridors. Through

her 28 years on the board of supervisors, she has preserved much of Sacramento County's natural beauty and open space.

Supervisor Collin has consistently been praised for her environmental record and leadership. She helped create the Sacramento Tree Foundation and the American River Parkway Foundation. She has received the Outstanding Service Award from the California Parks and Recreation Society as well as the Outstanding Public Official Award from the National Association of County Parks and Recreation Officials. In 2005, Supervisor Collin received the Environmentalist of the Year Award from the Sacramento Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Supervisor Collin performed an instrumental role in the women's movement. From 1973 to 1975, Illa helped lead the League of Women voters in Sacramento and in 1977 she became the first woman to serve as the President of the State Reclamation Board. She has also received the Hannah G. Solomon Award from the National Council of Jewish Women for improving the lives of women, children, and families.

Prior to her service on the board of supervisors, Illa worked to improve Sacramento on a number of fronts, including social services and community planning. Now, after seven terms, Illa will be departing from the board of supervisors. The people of Sacramento will miss her leadership, experience and dedication. Our community has been fortunate to be graced by the presence of such an extraordinary woman.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor one of Sacramento's most distinguished citizens, Illa Collin. Her success and steady voice has been an inspiration to Sacramento residents throughout the years. I ask all my colleagues to join me in thanking Illa Collin and wishing her continued success and happiness in her future endeavors.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE DRIVE ACT

### HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 24, 2007*

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, last night the President made some bold statements about energy security. He pledged to reduce U.S. gas consumption 20 percent from projected 2017 levels. That amounts to 2 million barrels of oil saved a day. Well if he is serious about his words and he wants to reduce oil consumption just a little more he should take a look at the DRIVE Act Representative KINGSTON and I are introducing today.

The challenge we face is clear. In order to protect our Nation and our environment it is essential we use oil more efficiently and develop a domestic economy revolving around clean alternative fuels.

Madam Speaker, our country has become increasingly dependent on oil imports from countries who deny their citizens basic democratic freedoms and, in some cases, sponsor terrorism. In the 1970s, the U.S. imported one-third of its oil and we now import 56 percent. If the trend continues, we will be importing

nearly 70 percent of our oil by 2025. It is simply unacceptable for us to sit idly by while OPEC gains a stranglehold over our economy and our security. In addition, there is now an irrefutable scientific consensus that global warming is real, it is dangerous and it is caused by greenhouse gas emissions.

For these reasons, Madam Speaker, we must act now to provide funding, incentives and leadership to wean our economy off oil and transform it into one empowered by the use of domestic energy.

In the last Congress, Representative KINGSTON and I introduced legislation to do just that: the bipartisan Fuel Choices for American Security Act. Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle and in both chambers sponsored the bill and it emerged as the consensus plan to develop a broad array of reliable and clean domestic fuels. The bill has now been improved and will be reintroduced today as the DRIVE Act, the Dependence Reduction through Innovation in Vehicles and Energy Act with over 60 cosponsors from both parties.

The bill has four main parts:

First, the bill will require the U.S. to use less oil—starting with oil savings of 2.5 million barrels of oil per day by 2015 and 5 million barrels per day by 2025. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will design and monitor the plan and other Federal agencies will have the power to issue regulations to make the plan a reality.

Second, the legislation will renew Detroit by helping U.S. auto makers manufacture more efficient vehicles that provide the same performance consumers expect. It will do this by providing funds for automakers to retool factories and help them commercialize new efficiency technologies such as plug-in hybrids and light-weight materials. In addition, the bill will help bring fuel-efficient tires into the marketplace and give authority to set efficiency standards for new heavytrucks.

Third, the bill will help develop a domestic alternative fuel economy by mandating incentives for cellulosic biofuels, creating an alternative fueling infrastructure fund for installation of alternative fuel pumps, and providing further incentives to purchase fuel efficient vehicles.

Finally, the bill provides for a nationwide oil security public education campaign to be administered by the Secretary of Energy.

If we implement these policies today we can make America a safer, healthier, and cleaner place. But Madam Speaker, we cannot delay action any longer. The longer we wait, the longer we are at risk for an energy security crisis or irreversible global warming.

Madam Speaker, I urge you to pass the DRIVE Act as soon as possible.

#### TRIBUTE TO ALPHA & OMEGA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

### HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 24, 2007*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Alpha & Omega Christian Fellowship in Collinsville, Illinois. The church will cele-

brate their 25th anniversary with a special service on January 28, 2007.

The church was founded in January 1982 and Gary Anderson served as pastor. The first services were held in the State Park Community House. Later, that same year, the church purchased the former State Park School and has transformed it into a beautiful house of worship. In 1984 Ron Habermehl became the pastor of the congregation with his wife, Debi, as co-pastor and they still minister to the congregation today.

The congregation of Alpha & Omega Christian Fellowship lives out the words of Isaiah 58:12, "Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In." (NKJV) Their food pantry which serves their community, as well as their focus on bringing up the next generation, fulfills the mission of these words.

I am pleased to congratulate Alpha & Omega Christian Fellowship on 25 years of service to the Lord. My prayers will be with them during this special time. May God bless Alpha & Omega Christian Fellowship.

#### LEGISLATION TO ADDRESS OUR NATION'S ENERGY NEEDS

### HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 24, 2007*

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise to inform my colleagues of legislation I have introduced today to address our Nation's energy needs through investment incentives for coal-to-liquid, CTL, technology.

The legislation that I have proposed will expand the Alternative Fuels Excise Tax Credit to include CTL technology, allow for the expensing of equipment used in the CTL process, and allow for enhanced oil, natural gas, and coalbed methane recovery credits.

My bill, identical to H.R. 5653 in the 109th Congress, has been supported by the Southern States Energy Board, a bipartisan, multi-state consortium dedicated to enhancing economic development through innovations in energy and environmental policies.

Our economic future and our national security now depend on unstable sources of foreign oil. Few realize the numerous possibilities for alternative oil and liquid transportation fuel production that lie right here within our borders. In fact, America has the world's largest alternative liquid fuels resource base of coal, biomass, and oil shale. Exciting technologies are now available to harness these resources in an environmentally responsible and economically rewarding way to substitute conventional oil use.

I believe the incentives offered by an expanded Alternative Fuels Excise Tax Credit will foster an environment where this important technology can become a viable production option. I ask my colleagues to consider their support for this bill in an effort to ensure that all necessary tools are in place to achieve energy independence in the years ahead.