

removed from “tree plantations” or biomass that is considered slash or brush can be used to meet the renewable fuel standard. It would also exclude any biomass taken from old growth forests, forests in the later stages of development, or forests that are considered “ecological communities” as defined by State Natural Heritage Programs.

With these restrictions, this Renewable Fuels Standard discourages efforts to reduce wildfire risk, control insects and disease in forests, improve forest health and wildlife habitat, and create market opportunities for family forest owners. There is also a tremendous opportunity to utilize existing forest products industry infrastructure to produce renewable fuels. H.R. 6 would do little to encourage that development.

A renewable fuels producer would likely look at all these restrictions on forest biomass and decide not to bother with forestry materials. If we are to come anywhere close to meeting the RFS mandates in H.R. 6, we must have a substantial amount of forest biomass as a feedstock. I'm deeply concerned that we will not be able to meet these mandates with the restrictions in H.R. 6 on the use of forest biomass.

This energy policy, set in place by the Democrat majority, exemplifies the Democrat motto through and through: tax and spend. This bill imposes \$21 billion in tax increases. The other side will tell you that these tax increases will not affect the average hardworking American, only the “big, evil oil companies.” Nothing could be farther from the truth. The taxes contained in this bill will impede new domestic oil and gas production, will discourage investment in new refinery capacity, and will make it more expensive for domestic energy companies to operate in the U.S. than their foreign competitors, making the price at the pump rise even higher.

Let's make no mistake: an increased tax doesn't just hurt energy companies, it hurts every American—individual, farm, or company—that consumes energy. Increased taxes on energy companies are passed to consumers. Every American will see these increased costs on their energy bill. This body shouldn't pass legislation that further raises energy prices for consumers.

What is even more disturbing is that these increased costs will be felt by some of our Nation's most poor. On average, the Nation's working poor spends approximately 13 to 30 percent of their yearly income on energy costs. This average is already too high, and sadly this legislation will only dramatically increase the amount of money these workers will have to spend on energy costs. I have heard those on the other side of the aisle say that we must all shoulder the cost to produce clean energy. Well, the costs of the clean energy in the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) alone, as estimated by just one of Virginia's many electric utilities, will increase \$200 million for its retail customers. By shifting to renewable energy sources, that are not as available or as cost effective as traditional sources, we will see a rise in energy prices across the board and this will be hardest felt by working people who cannot afford to shoulder any more costs.

While this bill is said to be focused on new energy technologies, it fails to address some of our most promising domestic alternative and renewable energy supplies that could be

cost effective for American consumers. Coal is one of our Nation's most abundant resources, yet the development of coal-to-liquid technologies is ignored in this bill. Furthermore, this legislation does nothing to encourage the construction of new nuclear facilities.

Proponents of this legislation will tout how green this bill is; however, if my colleagues really want to promote green energy they should encourage the production of more nuclear sites, which provide CO₂ emission-free energy. The rest of the world is far outpacing the U.S. in its commitment to clean nuclear energy. We generate only 20 percent of our energy from this clean energy, when other countries can generate about 80 percent of their electricity needs through nuclear. It is a travesty that in over 1,000 pages this legislation does not once mention or encourage the construction of clean and reliable nuclear plants. Nuclear energy is the most reliable and advanced of any renewable energy technology, and if we are serious about encouraging CO₂-free energy use, we must support nuclear energy.

This legislation does nothing to address the energy concerns of our country; and it does nothing to relieve agricultural producers of their increasing input costs. This legislation only makes the situation worse and it is the product of a flawed process that does not have bipartisan support.

This bill is a dangerous policy for our country. If we really want to make our country energy independent, this Congress must pass an energy bill that contains energy. This bill does not. I urge my colleagues to reject this awful bill, let's start over, and work to find real solutions to the energy needs of our Nation.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Energy Independence and Security Act—a major step towards securing a new, clean energy policy for America.

Last November the American people told Congress that they wanted a new direction in our Nation's energy policy. Today we have the opportunity to vote for a bill that the overwhelming majority of our constituents agree is the most significant Federal energy legislation in nearly 30 years—a bill that helps our country deal with the current energy crisis, prepare for the energy realities of the future, and address the impending climate crisis.

The Energy Independence and Security Act contains an increase in fuel economy standards for cars and trucks. Raising CAFE standards will also reduce America's dependence on foreign oil by 1.1 million gallons per day, cut emissions almost 27 million tons per year, and save Minnesota families up to \$1000 every year.

The Energy Independence and Security Act sets landmark energy efficiency standards for appliances, lighting, and buildings. As a result, American consumers and companies will save billions of dollars in unnecessary energy costs, while decreasing their burden on the planet.

And the Energy Independence and Security Act makes a commitment to the fuels of the future, by replacing Middle East crude with Midwest crops.

By supporting this legislation we can make the first big step towards a more secure and more environmentally sustainable America. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation, and to continue working to overcome the obstructionism of the President for additional, needed reforms for our country and our planet.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 1173, during consideration of H. Con. Res. 254, recognizing and celebrating the centennial of Oklahoma statehood I incorrectly voted “nay”, when I intended to vote “Yea”.

SCAPPOOSE-VERNONIA SCHOOL

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. WU. Madam Speaker, as my colleagues know, in early December, the Pacific Northwest coast experienced severe storms. The storms caused devastating damage that isolated towns, left citizens without housing, transportation, communications, water, heat or electricity, and tragically caused loss of life. One city in my district, Vernonia, was particularly hard hit. The elementary, middle and high school were all severely damaged. Because of the damage, Vernonia students in grades 6–12 are now going to school in the nearby community of Scappoose. Although the storm recovery continues, and will continue for some time, I wanted to share with my colleagues the following communication from Scappoose High School Principal Sue Hays reporting on the first day of Scappoose-Vernonia school. Her message is one of communities coming together, neighbors and families helping each other. Simply put, Oregonians at their best.

I will continue to do all I can to assist Oregon communities and families recover from the storms, but I wanted my colleagues in the House to know that the compassionate, proud, and hardy Oregon spirit shines on. Here is Principal Hays' message:

“Dear Scappoose Families,

I wanted to let you know how our first day of Scappoose-Vernonia School was. It was a great day, a very emotional day as the Vernonia students arrived in seven buses. Their teachers greeted them at the cafeteria doors with open arms. Every comment from the Vernonia staff to students was so heart felt. Questions about how is your family? How is your house? Are you ok? And . . . “we are so glad you are here . . . we have missed you” was repeated with each child. Many hugs took place as if these students had not seen each other for a lifetime! It was a very emotional moment for some of us.

We managed to feed all 300 students that showed up in record time, and then the

Vernonia students were off to the gym for an assembly and to get their new schedules. The Scappoose students then assisted the students to their classrooms and gave them guided tours of our building. Our Scappoose students came in for lunch shortly afterwards and then they headed home for the day.

It is now 3:30 and the halls are quiet and the Vernonia student's grades 6–12 are in class listening to teachers and working away on the latest assignment given to them. It is like nothing ever happened and they don't seem to know that they are even in Scappoose. They do know that there is teaching and learning going on, friends have reunited and the teachers that love them are there to support them and teach them.

I am so in awe of our staff and students who have handled this situation with grace, enthusiasm and superb organizational skills. The Vernonia students and staff have been very appreciative and they do have "stories" to tell. I talked to a couple of students today where one told me he still had 6 feet of water in his house. Another student told me he lost everything including his house. The lesson of the day was "giving and receiving".

Thank you all for your support and "class act" that your sons and daughters displayed today, even at 7:30 am in the morning! Report was that most everyone was on time!

If any of you wish to volunteer to "man" the donation areas at the high school, please let us know via email scappoosehighschool@scappoose.k12.Or.us. Mr. Casey Honl has volunteered to coordinate and supervise the donations! People are now wanting to donate appliances and furniture, and we are trying to locate a facility that we can store the items in. We are still accepting cash donations with checks made out to "Vernonia School Project". We are hoping to get all students a new pair of tennis shoes. I have 60 donated from Nike at this time. Lastly, we can't forget the food drive to fill our own food bank in Scappoose as well as sending food to Vernonia. The U-haul in front of the school will be open school hours Wednesday through Saturday am. Thanks again for being such a great community! You are loved!

IN TRIBUTE OF BERTRAM M. LEE SR.

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise in tribute to Bertram M. Lee Sr., a trailblazing entrepreneur who exemplified the truest ideals of courage, fortitude and commitment. Bertram believed that there was nothing he could not achieve or conquer with personal dedication and faith as his instruments.

Bertram, who died in October 2003, gained national recognition as a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist. He broke through the barriers that sought to limit his vision to accomplish more than was expected of a person of his background. He launched large, sophisticated firms and expanded opportunities for other Black entrepreneurs and executives in media and telecommunications industries.

As lead investor and president of Dudley Station Corporation he was in the vanguard of minority ownership of major media properties. His efforts culminated in 1982, when New England Television Corporation, a minority-led consortium acquired WNEV-TV, Boston's CBS affiliate. Under his leadership as President of the corporation from 1982–1986, both the value of the station and its journalistic quality increased.

Bertram went on to become the first minority owner of a professional sports franchise as co-owner and managing partner of the Denver Nuggets basketball team. In banking, he showed outstanding leadership as chairman of the board of directors of Boston Bank of Commerce. He also served on the boards of Shawmut Bank and Reebok International, Inc. A common thread woven through all of his accomplishments was his ability to expand existing boundaries and open opportunities in areas that were traditionally closed to African-Americans.

In politics, we worked together on the historic campaign to elect David Dinkins, the first African American mayor of my beloved city of New York. We shared a view of the world that believed in, and struggled for, the empowerment of African Americans no matter where they were on the globe. I urge my colleague to join me in recognizing this great American.

END OF SESSION

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, as we prepare to adjourn for the holiday season, we eagerly await the chance to spend time with our loved ones.

Radio music and advertisements offer cheery Jingle Bell tunes, the Christmas tree on the West Lawn has been lit, and we leave with a spirit of benevolence, wishing all a merry Christmas.

But unfortunately, Madam Speaker, not all who like Christmas will have it be merry because of a Grinch mean and scary who vetoes our bills with nary a thought.

The Grinch stole Christmas, Madam Speaker. He's robbed from the WHOS, and there's not a one weaker. And who are the WHOS? Why, any child can tell you—the WHOS are the children, the hungry, the poor, the ones we should help, not shove out the door.

While the tone I take is somewhat light-hearted, the subject matter is serious. The President, at almost every turn, has thwarted our efforts to help the most needy and vulnerable in our society.

First, the President has been callous towards the most vulnerable—our children, especially foster children.

The President vetoed a 15 million dollar increase for those children who surrounded by domestic violence are forced to take the safest way out—run. These youth depend on programs authorized under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act that fund homeless shelters and counseling to diffuse conflict at home and enable them to be reunited with their families.

Mr. Speaker, the 5 million dollar increase Congress approved for the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program—also vetoed by the President.

To the orphaned foster youth who are denied services when the clock strikes midnight on their 18th birthday, the President turns his back on them. Homeless, without health insurance, they become just another statistic to be quoted in the list of "throwaway" youth.

The President denied the sum of a mere 500,000 dollars to create a national registry on child abuse, a provision Congress passed with bipartisan support in the Adam Walsh Act.

Currently, Madam Speaker, child abusers need only to cross state lines to avoid prosecution and find employment as teachers or daycare providers. This national registry would track the offenses of predators to prevent abuse, and it is unconscionable to deny funds for this program.

That is not all that's been taken from under the tree. It's just the beginning, I hope you will see.

We demand so much from parents this day in age, Madam Speaker. They balance full-time parenting with full-time employment, often, at the cost of family life.

They make this sacrifice with the promise of providing a better future for their children. They send them to school and trust it will better equip them for tomorrow.

However, this President has turned a blind eye towards the education of our children.

The President's priorities translate into budget cuts for programs like Head Start, who will be forced to shut their programs door on 34,000 children.

Despite Congressional intent to increase funding for the 6.9 million children receiving special education, the President wants to reduce that funding and slash K–12 education by 1.3 billion dollars.

Madam Speaker, the President's priorities must not be allowed to stand. All children, no matter what their station in life, deserve a quality education and this Congress will continue to fight to ensure we honor our obligations to them.

And while the President will enjoy many Christmas carols this season, he wants to eliminate funding for Universal Newborn Hearing programs.

Madam Speaker, I could go on and on. This short, but illuminating list, best highlights the differences between the priorities of our two parties.

Congress will continue to fight for these vital programs and to ensure that the least among us are well protected. As we adjourn for the holidays and celebrate the season with our families, let us get in the Christmas spirit and rededicate ourselves to the welfare of the most vulnerable.

"And the Grinch with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store? What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more."

Thank you, happy holidays.