

Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays (unless the House is in session on such a day), unless the Committee agrees to a different time.

(4) Quorum. For the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence, one Member from the majority and one Member from the minority shall constitute a quorum, unless otherwise agreed to by the ranking minority member.

UNITED STATES-PERU TRADE
PROMOTION AGREEMENT—MES-
SAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC.
NO. 110-60)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit legislation and supporting documents to implement the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (Agreement). The Agreement represents a historic development in our relations with Peru, and it reflects the commitment of the United States to supporting democracy and economic growth in Peru. It will also help Peru battle illegal crop production by creating alternative economic opportunities.

In negotiating this Agreement, my Administration was guided by the objectives set out in the Trade Act of 2002. The Agreement will create significant new opportunities for American workers, farmers, ranchers, businesses, and consumers by opening new markets and eliminating barriers.

Under the Agreement, tariffs on approximately 80 percent of U.S. exports will be eliminated immediately. This will help to level the playing field, since over 97 percent of our imports from Peru already enjoy duty-free access to our market under U.S. trade preference programs. United States agricultural exports will enjoy substantial new improvements in access. Almost 90 percent, by value, of current U.S. agricultural exports markets will be able to enter Peru duty-free immediately, compared to less than 2 percent currently. By providing for the effective enforcement of labor and environmental laws, combined with strong remedies for noncompliance, the Agreement will contribute to improved worker rights and high levels of environmental protection in Peru.

The Agreement forms an integral part of my Administration's larger strategy of opening markets around the world through negotiating and concluding global, regional, and bilateral trade initiatives. The Agreement provides the opportunity to strengthen our economic and political ties with the Andean region, and underpins U.S. support for democracy and freedom while contributing to further hemispheric integration.

Approval of this Agreement is in our national interest.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, September 27, 2007.

□ 1900

AMERICA'S HERITAGE IS AT RISK
AS OUR NATION LOSES ITS WAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, when our Nation was founded, its spirit of independence and liberty permeated its creation. Freedom, independence, and liberty are the core of the American spirit. But I fear that our priceless heritage is at risk as our Nation loses its way. We are \$10 trillion in debt, dependent more and more on foreign borrowing every day to conduct wars not being paid for. We are energy dependent, not independent. We are dependent on foreign petroleum, 75 percent of which we import from foreign countries across the rest of the world. Most of those places are undemocratic regimes. We are dependent on that petroleum. We are dependent on importing capital because we are \$10 trillion in debt. Now we have the highest home foreclosure rate since the Great Depression.

The State that I represent, Ohio, which has lost so many jobs through outsourcing to foreign countries, is hard hit, as is our sister State north of us, the State of Michigan. Why? These are all the result of Wall Street draining people's accumulated equity from their largest form of savings, their home. When you have that amount of debt, you have to monetize it. You have to cover the gap. So what do you do? You send letters to the American people. The big banks are saying, "Do you want to borrow against your home equity? Do you want to borrow \$20,000 or \$30,000 or \$40,000?" That happened across our country, and now many people are living in homes where they owe more on their mortgage than the basic value of the home itself.

We are losing our independence. Families are losing their independence. In turn, the Nation is losing its independence. At some point, you might say, the chickens of profligacy have come home to roost.

We witness parts of our Nation being pawned off every day. We see turnpikes that the States used to own and run being rented out to foreign countries for 99 years, and then the taxpayers of those States having to pay for them again with interest over 99 years. And the debt never ends.

The latest fire sale, as was reported in the New York Times yesterday, is NASDAQ, one of the pillars of our stock market. The New York Times reported that an undemocratic country, the United Arab Emirates, which is a Middle Eastern fiefdom, intends to buy one-third of the NASDAQ. That is incredible.

Let me ask, why would we sell any part of the heart of our economy to a foreign government or any undemocratic interest? Why we would do this, unless we were broke. And we are broke. We are only holding it together with borrowing. If our government tried to buy one-third of the NASDAQ, I could just hear the voices in here saying, "socialism, socialism." It wouldn't be allowed. We would stop it. Why would we allow any foreign government or any foreign interest to purchase one-third of one of our pillars of capitalism in this country? The United Arab Emirates is notorious for human trafficking, for money laundering, including from terrorist networks. And we are going to allow them to buy one-third of the NASDAQ?

The United Arab Emirates is a hub in the Middle East for recirculating petrodollars that are taken out of our pockets because we are energy dependent here at home rather than energy independent. Those countries have amassed billions and billions and billions of dollars to fuel their undemocratic oil dictatorships. The UAE has no democratic government, no democratically elected government. Its citizens have no right to freely change their government. We have laws that tell us how often we have to change our Government. There is no freedom of representation in the United Arab Emirates. Why would we allow them to buy one-third of our stock market?

Mr. Speaker, I intend to introduce legislation to block this latest sellout of America.

IS AMERICA READY FOR AN
EXPENSIVE HEATING SEASON?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, it is September 27. We are just finishing the first week of fall. It doesn't seem possible, Mr. Speaker, that summer has slipped by. We are now entering the fall season. That means the cool nights and chilly days will soon be coming. The northern part of the country has already had a couple of movements of Canadian air down where we have chilly nights. That will soon cover most of the country. That means the heating season will begin.

The question I ask is this: Is America ready for the most expensive heating season that we may have ever faced? Yes, all of the last week, the first week of fall, we have had \$82 oil. In fact, at the close today it was just 12 cents, it would have been \$83 oil. I remember when \$50 oil caused a panic, and \$60 oil was going to be the end of all, and then \$70 oil, and this week we have had \$82 oil all week. I haven't heard many people talk about it because that price hasn't hit us yet. It hasn't hit the pump yet. It hasn't hit home heating costs yet.

But \$82 oil will give us the highest home heating oil prices we have ever had. It will also give us very high propane costs to heat our homes. Now, 60-some percent of our homes are heated with natural gas. The current price of natural gas, which is at the low ebb because of the summer low usage, is at \$7 today. That will soon be rising as we get into the fall season and gas consumption increases. This year, all of the gas distribution companies are warning their customers that they will pay from 9 to 15 to 20 percent more this year than last. That is only on a prediction, because that depends if we have no storms in the gulf or no major supplier of gas that goes offline. A storm in the gulf, and we have not had one that really damaged the gulf now all of last year and all of this year, would give us \$90 to \$95 oil quickly, could give us \$12 to \$15 gas quickly. Then we would have real pain in America, not only for those that are heating their homes, but the ones that buy this energy every day of the week, every week of the year, the manufacturers and the processors in America that run our plants: the steel mills, the aluminum mills, the chemical plants, the fertilizer plants, those who process our goods, those who bake our bread, those who cook our foods. I was talking to Hershey Foods today about the energy they use to roast the peanuts and melt the chocolate and make the candy. Energy is consumed in every process of life.

What has this Congress, in the few months we have been here, what have we accomplished to stabilize energy prices? I am just going to turn this chart over because that simplifies what we have not accomplished, because we haven't accomplished anything. There has not been one bill passed. There has been nothing changed. But we have been stirring around doing things.

I want to ask you tonight, Mr. Speaker, are the things we have been doing productive and helpful? Will they help Americans heat their homes and drive their cars with affordable energy? Well, the legislation that has been approved by this body, and I believe the Senate, removes 9 trillion cubic feet of gas in the Roan Plateau that was permitted. All the NEPA studies were done. All the environmental assessments were done. It was ready to be drilled. This legislation takes 9 trillion cubic feet of natural gas off the market.

This legislation also locks up the oil shale reserves in the West. What are the oil shale reserves? Well, some think it is the largest reserve of oil in the world. We still haven't figured out how to unlock it from the shale rock. But to the north of us, we have the tar sands that are very similar. It is going to take a lot of energy and a lot of heat to warm it up and get it out of there. I was talking to a Canadian company this morning, and in Canada they are now producing about 1.5 million barrels per day of tar sand oil. Their goal in a

year or 2 is to be at 3 or 4 million. They have been working on that for a long time, because it was a process that they needed to develop and that they needed to refine. They needed to figure out how to make it work.

Now, it seems that we down here in the States ought to be working just as diligently on the shale oil reserves so that we would be energy independent. The lady from Ohio was just talking about dependence. What we are talking about is the issues I am talking about here. Taking the 9 trillion cubic feet away, taking the shale reserves out, will make America not less dependent, but much more dependent on unstable foreign countries.

I don't understand the lack of urgency in this body. We have not had an urgency in this body since I have been here that I think is adequate, because America does not realize that \$82 oil might almost be a plateau upon which we can have spikes. If we have a storm in the gulf, it will spike. If we have a major sender of oil or a country we are getting a lot of oil from has any trouble with their government or any instability there or any kind of explosion in a pipeline or a loading dock, we can have \$100 oil. And we know then we would be looking at maybe \$3.75 to \$4 gasoline. We currently don't have \$3 gasoline in most of the country, some parts, but we soon will have, because \$82 oil will be more than \$3 gasoline when it catches up in the pipeline.

The legislation we have before us is making it very difficult to produce in the Alaskan National Petroleum Reserve that was set aside a long time ago. The rules are being changed. They are making it harder to permit. They are making it harder to produce there. That is a \$10 million oil reserve.

Then this one is the one that surprises me. I know a lot of Members of Congress hate oil companies, hate big oil. But we passed legislation here in the Senate, it is not law yet, thank God, that increases the taxation on anybody who produces energy and processes energy by 5 percent. So any company that produces energy in America will pay a 5-percent higher corporate income tax than anybody who manufacturers anything else. Now I don't know why we would do that. I know they want to get at the five big oil companies, but probably 75 to 80 percent of the production is not by big oil. They are the processors. They are the refiners. They are the marketers. But there is company after company that are investing billions in America and billions around the world to produce energy that are not big oil. They don't market oil. They drill and produce and move and transport petroleum and other products to the marketplace. Well, we are causing them to pay these taxes.

I have two refineries in my district still. One is a Penn grade crude refinery, American Refiners in Bradford, about 10,000 barrels a day, just a small refinery. They are going to pay 5 per-

cent more corporate taxes than any other business in Bradford, Pennsylvania. Is that fair? No. That is not fair. What will that do? That will make energy more expensive, not less expensive. It will not encourage people to produce in this country. It will encourage them to produce in other countries so they don't have to pay it.

United Refinery in Warren, Pennsylvania, that gets Canadian crude, gets it under the lake; it comes under the lake in a pipeline. It is a very good refinery. It has been growing about 70,000 barrels a day now. It is a company that I am very proud of and have worked with for years. They are going to pay 5 percent more corporate taxes now if this becomes law. That will make it more expensive for them to produce the gasoline and fuel oil for our people. Who will pay that? The consumers. We will pay that.

Also, the language that we have been working on, I was fortunate in the energy act in 2005 to put an amendment in that took away redundant NEPAs. Now, NEPA is a study. It is an environmental assessment that is very important that we do before we do anything on public land. Well, those who oppose the production of energy, and that is a lot of people in America, who don't want us to drill for oil, who don't want us to drill for gas, who don't want us to dig for coal, don't want us to use fossil fuels, and don't want nuclear, so they fight it. They fight it in the courts.

□ 1915

They use processes to make it difficult. I had people telling me in the West they had leased 6, 7 years prior and were still unable to drill a hole in the ground and bring any oil or gas up. It was because they were being caused to do a NEPA study for every step in the process.

Now, a NEPA study is a complete environmental assessment, and it's appropriate. But should you do five or six NEPA studies before you can drill for gas or oil? I don't think so. I don't think that is fair. That is just about delay. That is not about environmental protection. That is to prevent the production of energy.

I don't understand, because when you look at the chart, and let's look at it, we are using 40 percent petroleum, and currently 66 percent of that comes from, as the gentlewoman from Ohio said, foreign, unstable non-democratic governments that you really can't depend on.

Natural gas is 23 percent of our energy. That is the one that has been increasing. About 12 years ago we took away the moratorium on using natural gas to make electricity, and now 21 percent of our natural gas makes electricity. We now, for the sixth year in the row, have had the highest natural gas prices in the world. That has been a serious problem for business and industry, our job creators.

Dow Chemical, the largest chemical company in the world, in 2002 used \$9

billion worth of natural gas. That seems like an incredible figure. Four years later, in 2006, they spent \$22 billion. That's \$9 billion in 2002, \$22 billion in 2006. In four years, \$22 billion, because the price of natural gas had spiked in this country, higher than Europe, higher than all our competitors, five to six times higher than South America.

Natural gas prices have been one of the biggest drags on the American economy, because we use it to melt steel, we use it to bend steel, we use it to make aluminum, we use it to make ethanol, we use it to make hydrogen, we use it to heat our homes. In the petrochemical business, which Dow Chemical is in, they use it as an ingredient. Fertilizer, it's an ingredient; plastic products, it's an ingredient; polymers, it's an ingredient.

So natural gas is not only a fuel, but it's an ingredient. The face creams that we all like, the skin softeners that keep our face and hands soft, that is a direct product from natural gas. Natural gas is the finest product known to man to make things with.

Then we have coal. The bulk of that is used to make electricity. I had a gentleman ask me the other day, how are we coming on coal to liquids, coal to gas?

Well, we are not. In World War II, Germany fought us with liquids made from coal. It was called the Fischer-Tropes process. We have paid many universities in this country and researchers to come up with other ways. There are numerous ways now to make liquids. We could make jet fuel, we could make gasoline, we could make diesel out of coal. We have not refined it and we have not made it cost effective, but we know how to do it. We can make natural gas out of coal. But there is such an anti-coal sentiment in America, because it produces carbon in the air.

I said to the person, there have been groups in the Senate and there have been groups in the House trying to put pilot projects or some way of helping push the ball down the road for coal to liquid and coal to gas so that we can be less dependent on foreign oil, but not one of those has even come close to having a vote to get in any of the energy packages that are moving.

We have clean coal technology to make electricity out of coal. It's much cleaner than the old processes. But there are those who think today they probably couldn't build one of those plants because there is such opposition. Though we are the Saudi Arabia of coal, it's kind of sitting on the sidelines.

Eight percent of our energy comes from nuclear. Since the Energy Act of 2005, thirty-some companies have put in plans and requests for permitting of new nuclear facilities, and I think all on existing sites, expansion of current plants and new plants. In fact, I see the other day that the first two permits to come in to build a completely new reactor, not just additions, have come in.

But the 35 permits we have in process, I am told by the industry that by 2020 we need them all to just keep nuclear at 8 percent of our electric generation, because our electric use is rising so fast that we need to grow nuclear or nuclear won't be 8 percent; it may be 7 percent, then 6½ percent.

Hydroelectricity is not growing. Clean energy, no pollution, but there's great opposition. You couldn't build a dam in this country today; that is not allowed. So hydroelectric is just where it's at, and that percentage will continue to shrink. As the use of electric goes up, this will go down to 2.5, 2.3, 2 percent. We have lots of dams in this country that have not been harnessed, and there's been a real resistance.

The only good news on the chart is biomass, which is wood waste and things, pellet stoves, people heating their home from pellets. You have factories heating in the woods where we have lots of forests and mills where we process wood. They use it to heat the boilers to heat the factory. They use it to top off some of the coal plants, which allows them to meet air standards. It may be 80 percent coal and 20 percent wood waste. Biomass has been growing. Of course, down the road we hope to get into cellulosic ethanol. I will talk about that a little later.

Geothermal is a very good form of energy, but a very small percentage. We use that by using the ground temperature, whether we drill into wells and use the well water, or whether we put a loop system in deep enough that you have the ground temperature and you take heat out in the wintertime and take cold out in the summertime to cool your home or heat your home. But that is a very expensive investment and is usually done in new construction, and it is pretty disruptive to do it in an existing neighborhood.

Wind and solar are the two sexy ones. They get a lot of talk, and there are a lot of things going on there. But we see the percentage. If we double these percentages, even if we triple these percentages, we are not to 1 percent. These are very small numbers.

We all like them because they are clean. I shouldn't say "we" all like them. We had a bill introduced this year that was introduced in the Resources Committee that said if a bird was found at the foot of a windmill, it was going to be a criminal offense. I think that language was removed in the bill that moved. But that shows you that someone is not very pro-wind, because birds and bats will occasionally get in that path and hit those blades.

But these two, what the problem is, when the wind doesn't blow, we have to have a natural gas generator to turn on. That is what we do. Then solar, when the sun doesn't shine, we have to have a natural gas generator to turn on. When you add these up, wind and solar and geothermal, you are less than 1 percent of the overall energy mix. No matter how much we increase them,

they are a fraction. It will be a long time before they are real numbers.

So what does that mean? That means whether we like fossil fuels or not, we must have more petroleum, we must have more gas, we must have more coal, we must grow nuclear, we should be growing hydroelectric. Biomass is the only one that is really showing much growth.

But I want to tell you, the environmental groups in America that are running energy policy, and certainly today in this House, are anti-petroleum, because you drill a hole in the ground. They are anti-natural gas. I don't understand that one, because natural gas is a clean gas. There is no nitric oxide. There is no sulfuric acid. There is one-third of the CO₂, if you are concerned about CO₂. It is really the green field.

In my view, the only way we will survive or prevent a crisis in America on energy is if we really pull the stops up and open up every natural gas field we can until we can develop some of the renewables, until we can find other sources of energy.

We have ethanol. Ethanol now, in 2006 we produced 5 billion gallons. This year, we are at 6 billion gallons. So we are growing. Our ethanol is made out of corn. Brazil's was made out of sugar cane. That was cheaper to make.

To make ethanol out of corn, you have two processes. You have to take the starch and turn it to sugar. Then you ferment the sugar and make the ethanol that you use as a fuel. So it is a dual process. Ninety-five percent of all these plants are fueled with natural gas. So we need natural gas for that.

Natural gas, like I said, is the only fuel that can really prevent this. We have a lot of petroleum being produced in this country, but we can never be self-sufficient. People who think we are going to be independent are just talking.

Natural gas, we can be self-sufficient, we can keep moderate prices. We can expand natural gas use in our auto fleet and save a lot of oil with natural gas, in my view. But natural gas is looked at just like oil. You have got to drill a hole in the ground, and you must not do that.

In my opinion, from the administration on down, there are really no strong proponents of coal. There are Members of Congress that are strong proponents, but certainly far from a majority. And I don't look for any progress on coal. I don't look for any progress on petroleum. I have not given up on natural gas, and I will talk about my bill in a moment, because we believe that natural gas is our only hope of diverting an energy crisis in America.

What do I mean by an energy crisis? I mean oil prices where we cannot afford to compete. The problem we have today, Americans are struggling, the poorer Americans are struggling, by the time they heat their homes this winter, drive their cars, to have adequate funds left for health care and

food and all the other substantives of life. Energy prices are going to make it very difficult on the poor in this country as they continue to rise. But even worse, and I know people don't care as much about companies, but companies and businesses who are employing us, they make up the payrolls. They give people a chance to make a living.

We have the highest natural gas prices in the world; and when our companies are paying the highest prices for the fuel they use to make products, then they are not competitive in the world marketplace.

We have lost more jobs in America than we can count. We blame it on trade agreements; we blame it on lots of other things. But the last 6 to 7 years, natural gas prices were between \$1.77 and \$2 for years, we had a couple of spikes in the seventies and eighties, and then the climb started. Then came Katrina. Now we are up in the \$7 and \$8 figure. With a storm in the gulf, we could be back up to \$14 or \$15 again, because as we enter the heating season, we are at the low ebb of the year, about \$7 per thousand, but a lot the gas that is in the ground for this year's use, we paid \$8, \$9 and \$10, because we put gas in storage all for the winter usage. I don't know what the average price is coming out, but most of the utilities have told us 9 to 20 percent more for heating a home with natural gas this year, depending on which utility you are on, when they bought their gas or how they bought their gas.

So we are looking at a measurable increase. We are looking at a real spike in fuel home heating prices, because \$82 oil will be the most expensive home heating prices we have ever had. Propane comes from both, so propane will be somewhere in the mix. It is always more than natural gas. So the cost of heating our homes this year will be very important.

Now, let's bring up the chart on what we think is the solution, the best thing we can do.

Here is a picture of this country. You could also have some great big blobs in here where we have locked up huge resources of natural gas and coal and oil that are on public land, because in the West, the vast majority of the land is owned by the Federal Government.

But where we are different than any other country in the world is we have chosen to lock up our Outer Continental Shelf. What is the Outer Continental Shelf? Well, Mr. Speaker, that is from 3 miles offshore to 200 miles offshore. Every country in the world produces a lot of their oil and gas out there, because it is very prevalent.

Now, we produce in just a small piece in the gulf, and we get 40 percent of our energy from there. This small area down here is what keeps America alive. Otherwise, we would be importing 80 to 90 percent of our oil from foreign countries.

I just find it amazing that we have chosen as a country that we are just not going to produce more. Maybe 10

years ago when gas was \$2 a thousand and oil was \$10 a barrel, it may have been a smart argument, let's buy theirs while it is cheap and save ours for when it is expensive.

Well, we are still saving ours. We have \$82 oil. We are still saving ours. I think if we had \$90 oil next month, we would still be saving ours. I have been here awhile. We have been trying to open up this for a number of years. We had a successful bill last year, but we didn't have success in the Senate. But it makes no public policy sense to not be producing oil and gas off our Outer Continental Shelf.

□ 1930

It is the safest with the least environmental impact. The sight line from shore is about 11 miles, so when you are past that, you can't see it. The commotion caused from a drilling rig, a thousand drilling rigs, is less than one storm as far as turmoil on the ocean floor. And there hasn't been a major spill of oil except for the one in Santa Barbara in 1969.

The technology of today is when a storm comes or there is a problem, the valve of the rig on the ocean floor is electronically turned off. When we had the tremendous storms in the gulf several years ago, we had very little spillage because when the storm was coming, they turned off the valves. If the platforms move, the rig is ruined, nothing happens. We have always had more spillage in the ocean from hauling oil in tankers than from wells. But we don't prohibit tankers because then we wouldn't have any oil.

I don't understand why we are financing all of these countries in the world by being dependent on them. They are not our friends. They were the ones that sent those here on 9/11, but we are funding them with these huge oil costs and we just plain will not use our own. There is no good reason why we couldn't be producing a lot more of our own energy, totally self-sufficient in gas, stable prices and competing with the world with all our manufacturing. We can help oil prices in the world by supply, but we cannot dictate them because we are not that big a player unless we learn how to use our shale oil down the road, and then we could say good-bye to the foreign imports.

But it seems to me that we ought to be opening up the OCS. That is the simplest. And my proposal is pretty simple. We are just going to open it up for natural gas. We are going to say the first 50 miles, that is up to the States. Only if the State wants to open it, can they. We are not opening it.

The second 50 miles would be open for natural gas only, but a State would still have the ability to say no. They could pass a law in their State and say Congress, we don't want this open. Then it would be protected for 100 miles.

For the second 100 miles, our bill would open gas. I would like to be opening oil out there, too, because that

is so far out, there is just not an environmental problem. But we are just asking for gas because we think gas is more of a crisis than oil because we are going to lose more jobs in this country because of the highest natural gas prices in the world.

Mr. Speaker, \$80 oil is pretty painful, but it is painful to the whole world. That is the world price. When we have gas that is twice and three times and four times what competing countries are at, we are at a disadvantage.

We have lost half of our fertilizer industry in the last 2 years because of natural gas prices. We are losing our petrochemical industry. Those are some of the best jobs left in America. We are going to be losing our polymer and plastic jobs because of natural gas prices. It just seems to me that we really, really need to change our attitude in this country and say let's be more independent.

Those who tell you we can be independent are not being honest with you. I don't know of any way we can be independent. We will also always be dependent on foreign energy in our lifetime. Maybe some day with new forms of energy or new ways of powering vehicles and new ways of lighting and heating our homes, if we can do that, some day we might be. But all of the things that we are working on are still on the margins. We want to grow them all. We want to move them as fast as we can. We want all of the renewables that we can get. But those who tell you that renewables will take care of even the growth in energy needs are not being honest with you. And those who say that renewables displace oil and gas and coal needs in this country are not being honest with you because they just can't.

We need to have the OCS opened up. We need to promote all of the renewables we can. The President is promoting cellulosic ethanol. We are at 6 billion gallons of ethanol, and they want to get to 35. That is a big jump. I don't know whether we can get there. They want not to just be corn. And I noticed today corn prices are approaching \$4 a bushel again. When we started making ethanol, corn was less than \$2. Nobody knows where it is going to be when we go through another season because there are a lot of ethanol plants being built. We will have a lot more capacity a year from now to make ethanol.

There are problems with ethanol. It takes a lot of energy to make it. I am not opposed, but it costs a lot to make it. And one of the problems is that ethanol cannot be put in a pipeline system where the vast majority of our energy is put out to the stations. We have to blend it at the station or blend it at the distributorship and haul it in tankers because it has a corrosiveness to it. So unless we change all of the pipelines in the country, ethanol has a serious problem that we have not been able to overcome yet. We have to haul it separately and then blend it at the station

in a tank. So it has a distribution problem.

The President wants to do cellulosic ethanol which will be from any kind of waste material. It could be from wood waste when you ferment it to make it. Or it could be from garbage, which seems to make some sense. It could be from things like switchgrass and cornstalks and any kind of cellulose, cellulosic ethanol.

The problem is that it is still in the laboratory. We think we have about got it to where we can make it. They are funding six plants which are going to be experimental. I am for that, but I think we should be doing the same thing simultaneously with coal. Taking every process we have to make liquids from coal and refining it, improving it so we can do it in volume down the road. Coal to gas and coal to liquid, every measure we know, we ought to be refining those and getting those to where they will help us to be independent.

And we should be continuing to promote nuclear. The nuclear we have on the drawing boards will keep us from losing percentage. It will not help us grow, but we need to figure out, and that may be one of the biggest mistakes we made, if we are really concerned about CO₂, we certainly should be for nuclear power plants.

But we need to be doing all of these, Mr. Speaker. We need the OCS open. We need that clean, green natural gas, affordable and available to heat our homes, run our businesses, and manufacture products so we can compete in the world marketplace. We need clean, green natural gas as well as cellulosic ethanol, as well as all of the renewables, as well as coal to liquids, as well as coal to gas, and as well as clean coal technology and more nuclear plants.

A lot of our competitors, like China and India, they are buying up reserves of oil and gas all over the world. They are building coal plants, coal-to-liquid plants. They are building hydrodams. They are building every form of energy there is at breakneck speed. We as a country are sitting here on our hands twiddling our thumbs, actually today moving in the direction of less available energy, which will make us more costly and more foreign dependent.

The legislation that we have before us, if it becomes law, I think will speed up, and we have been gaining in dependence on foreign oil about 2 percent a year for the last 10 years. I think we will speed it up to 3 to 4 percent a year if we go down to the road of taxing oil more, of taking major plateaus and major reserves off the table, refusing to open up the OCS, our dependence will grow. When you are at 66, you don't have to go very far to where you're three-fourths, and then you are 80 percent and the rest of the world will just plain own us because they today, OPEC today sets the price of oil. Five years ago they didn't. They had lost their grip. But today, they set the price of oil.

Imports. This is not quite up to date. I am going to have to get a new chart with 2 more years on it. But we are back on a steady climb. I predict it won't be very long until we will be at 70. And if we pass the legislation that is before the House and do nothing else, do nothing to open up, do no OCS, do no Alaskan, and continue to take much of the Midwest out of the picture, continue to lock up more reserves, we will be 70 and climbing towards 75 at breakneck speed and America will be dependent for their total economy, for the ability to heat their homes and manufacture, on foreign, unstable nondemocratic countries who will actually and literally own us. That's not the America I want for my grandchildren and for your grandchildren. I want an America that has a sound energy policy that produces oil, produces gas, produces coal, moves into all of the renewables and does more on conservation.

I haven't talked about conservation, but prices are going to force us to conserve. There are many who want prices as high as we can get them so we will use less energy. Well, they are winning. And I am going to tell you, energy prices this winter will be the highest they have ever been, and we will be dependent on weather as to how high they go.

Major storms in the gulf, major cold weather where we consume a lot of heat, will set prices far higher than they are today. We are not in control. The weather and unstable parts of the world will dictate what America does for energy.

CONSTITUTION CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCINTYRE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to come to the floor tonight as we wrap up this week's session in Congress. It was just last week, Monday, the 17th of September, when we celebrated the 220th anniversary of the signing of our founding document of this country, the Constitution. It was on September 17, 1787, 39 revolutionary and visionary Founding Fathers changed the course of history in this land and the world as well.

It came about after months of deliberations. What they did was succeed in securing liberties and freedoms that were, quite honestly, unimaginable to previous civilizations. I should just note, to commemorate this and honor the civilization's most ingenious governmental guidelines that we recognized last week, I introduced House Resolution 646 to that end.

Tonight I come to the floor, as we do often as part of the Constitutional Caucus, to raise up the issue of the Constitution, that seminal document, that document that we should be looking to each and every day when House Mem-

bers and Senate Members come to the floor after having deliberated various issues and bills, and taking out of their pocket their voting card and sliding into that slot, to ask themselves: Is what we are about to vote on constitutional? Is it within the confines of the Founding Fathers' document?

Tonight I am joined by my colleagues, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), and I believe shortly the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOX) as well, as we deliberate and discuss the issues of the Constitution.

We do this for several purposes. It is an illuminating event we believe both for Members of Congress and also for the general public as well, an opportunity to explore and expand and expound upon this important document. Because if we lose that, if we lose that as a guiding principle, obviously there will be nothing as a guide for us or a restriction into the role we are elected to abide by.

Tonight we will touch on various issues, all within the confines of that document, but we are generally going to stay within the area of voting. Some legislation that we have looked at in the past, and I will probably touch upon a little later on, and some legislation that is coming down the pipe fairly shortly, to address some of the issues that people have raised throughout the country with regard to the veracity of past voting patterns in this country.

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So at this point, I would like to turn the microphone over to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) for his comments, who I always appreciate Mr. BISHOP's insight.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from New Jersey for helping to organize this, as well as talk about these topics, and every once in a while to take the process that we probably should be doing more often and simply review our actions and see if they deal with some type of philosophical basis.

When the Founding Fathers established this country, they established a Federal system with the understanding that certain powers and responsibilities would be given to the national level and certain powers and responsibilities on the local level.

Now, this was not done in some random process. They took the time to try and figure out which would best fit in which category, realizing there are some tasks of government that naturally would be better done if they were done on a unified level, and certain other responsibilities that would be best performed by local government.

One of those that they decided would be better performed, and I should say best performed, a superlative, by local government was the manner of elections. And they clearly realized that if elections were the purview and responsibility of States that they had a better opportunity of being effective and