

2006 on the floor as we really get to the substance of a real disappointment to the American people today, which was the veto of our SCHIP legislation, the bipartisan SCHIP legislation, and just to say that when we provide for the least of these in our society, we are building a stronger Nation. When we recognize that no one is disposable in our society, we have an obligation to reach out and to provide for those who can't provide for themselves.

□ 1930

If we take care of a child today who's low income, that child becomes a productive part of our society. They will be taking care of us as we grow older, and it's a cycle and it's a circle, and when we understand that, then we know how important this vote is coming up. And we want to urge our colleagues across party lines, hold the line on SCHIP, hold the line on SCHIP. Our low-income children, our children in our communities, our families who are just struggling to make ends meet need us to be there for them to override this veto.

I want to thank my colleagues for having me in the class of 2006 and speaking out today and turn it over to my colleague, Dr. KAGEN of Wisconsin.

Mr. KAGEN. I thank my colleague, and some have said you ain't going nowhere; there's more work to be done.

Ms. CLARKE. That's right.

Mr. KAGEN. I want to thank you for the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, for sharing with the American people what's happening here in their House, the House of Representatives.

I would remind everyone here on the floor and at home that we are all in this together. As the poorest among us go, so go we all. We have an obligation to care for all those who are in need right here and right now, and by working together I'm absolutely convinced we have the opportunity to change America, but we can't do it without the people's help.

They should call their Representatives. They should e-mail and write, but bear in mind, we have writing that's slow mail. Send an e-mail. Call your local Congressperson. Express yourself. Your voice will be heard.

It is our duty to listen to the American people. That is exactly what we've been doing, and their voice has been heard tonight in the House of Representatives. We must stand up and fight for the health care for our children on whose future we depend.

Mr. ELLISON. The Members of the difference makers, the majority makers, the class of 2006 who are in this 110th Congress ran on a platform of change, succeeded on that platform as Americans all across the country endorsed that platform of change, coming together from diverse parts around the country, all for one thing, which is to elevate and uplift the public good and the interests of the American people. Whether it's on the issue of war and peace or disease and wellness, or what-

ever it may be, education, workers' rights, civil rights, environmental sustainability, whatever it is, we will continue to raise our voices because we were brought here to bring change.

We're fresh off the campaign trail, knocking on doors, talking to folks at the doorstep about what they need and what they care about. Our idealism is high. Our energy is high. Our resolve is strong, and we will be here for the American people.

Mr. KAGEN. Together, we will.

Mr. ELLISON. Together, we will.

Ms. CLARKE. Together, we will.

Mr. ELLISON. That's right.

ENERGY

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's a pleasure to join you this evening and talk about an issue that I think is vital to America's future.

We're in the beautiful time of year. My favorite time of year is the fall season, and it's arrived. We have now a week of fall behind us. The cool days and cold nights will soon be here all so quickly, and the home heating season will begin where Americans will struggle this year to keep their homes warm, and American factories and businesses and manufacturers will struggle to pay their very high energy bills to continue to compete in a global economy, manufacturing, processing and distributing their goods.

Home heating oil prices this year will be record highs with the \$80 oil that's upon us and that has been with us for more than a week now. Home heating oil prices will have the largest increase, and those who heat with home heating oil will be under severe pressure to be warm affordably. Propane and natural gas prices are scheduled to go up again this year, propane a little more than natural gas, but both of them, and that's barring no storms in the gulf.

We've been very fortunate in the country. For a year and a half now, we have not had a major storm in the gulf, and why that's a problem is 40 percent of America's energy comes from the gulf. And when we have a major storm there like Katrina and Rita in the same year, there's huge disruptions in the ability to produce both gas and oil and refine it and process it and ship it around this country, and it will help prices to raise drastically.

I guess the question I ask tonight is, what is Congress doing? Is it a discussion? I don't know about you. I've listened to the last two Presidential debates, one Republican, one Democrat, and the press asks the question, but not one question while I was listening was asked about energy. I find that amazing because here we are with \$80 oil. Is it a new floor?

My chart, which goes through 2006, has this up as high \$60, but we're clear up here in the \$80s. Most people were very concerned that \$60 and \$70 oil would put us into recession, but when you look at the constant increase in the last 5, 6 years of oil prices just skyrocketing and no stopping, and the scary part on oil is that historically in the world marketplace we had slush. I mean, we had extra oil. There were 10, 12, 15 million barrels of oil that were available to be produced daily if we needed them. I'm told today that we're lucky between 1 million and 2 million barrels a day is available if we have a crisis.

So, if we would have a storm in the gulf that could take a few million barrels off the market and you had one of our Third World countries that ship a lot of oil have a governmental problem or a terrorist attack one of their sending stations or their pipeline systems, then we could lose 4, 5, 6 million barrels of oil a day. You would see prices at \$100 very quickly. \$100 oil will have a severe crisis in this country.

We now have \$7.50 gas. It's going up weekly now. The season is here. We're through the soft season, and much of the gas in the ground for this year's storage was put in at much higher prices than that. Then you have the storage costs and the distribution costs, and we're talking about a sizeable increase in natural gas prices this year.

As I was showing you the oil chart, oil prices continue to spike, and yet we hear nothing from Congress. We don't hear questions and much discussion in the Presidential campaigns, and I find that confounding because energy, reasonable, affordable energy, is why America is what it is today.

Natural gas prices, you know for a long time natural gas prices were around \$2 or less, and then we had spikes, and then we came back down. And now we are on the same path as oil. We're right up here about here now, \$7.50. That's out-of-the-ground price. That's not the price you and I pay at home or the companies pay. Pipeline charges, storage charges, distribution costs, I mean it's clear up in here, \$12, \$13 gas when it gets to us as a consumer.

But the price out of the ground, this is the price out of the ground that we start at. We're up here. We will be soon approaching \$8, and that will continue to rise as heating season comes and industry continues to use.

Well, why is this? Why is America having this constant skyrocketing prices in energy? Well, here's one of the reasons.

About 26 years ago, the President of the United States and two Presidents since and Congress both put moratoriums on producing offshore. That's called our Outer Continental Shelf. The States control the first three miles, and then the United States Government controls the next 197 miles to 200.

Now, the only place we've historically produced is right here. 40 percent

of our energy has come from this little area, and last year we opened another small area down here that will be helpful, but will certainly not solve our problem.

So America is the only country in the world that has locked up its best oil and gas reserves that cannot be produced. Countries like Canada don't do that. Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, New Zealand, all environmentally sensitive countries, they all produce out here. Everybody's given kudos to South America, to Brazil for being one of the first countries that is now energy independent, and everybody thinks it's their ethanol. Ethanol was a part of it, but they opened up their Outer Continental Shelf. They produce out here.

There's tremendous gas reserves around Florida. There's tremendous gas reserves up and down the coast and oil reserves. Now, there are those who are afraid. The last oil spill we had offshore was at Santa Barbara in 1969. That's a long time ago, and we've never had a natural gas spill and we never will because natural gas escapes into the air.

Now, we could also put some huge blocks in here of where we, the government, have locked up some of our best reserves in the West, and for some reason, we, being one of the largest users of energy in the world, have decided that we're not going to produce it. So we're very much the reason, because of those charts that I showed you previously are just going almost straight up.

Now, we do have energy bills in the House and the Senate, and they will be considered at some point in time. They're not scheduled yet. They were supposed to be on the floor now, but they've not been scheduled yet but we think they will be. The only problem is, as you see at the top of my chart, we call them the No Energy Bill because they don't produce energy.

They lock up 9 trillion cubic feet of America's natural gas. It cuts off production from the Rome plateau, a huge clean natural gas field in Colorado that was once set aside as the naval oil shale reserve in 1912 because of its rich energy resources. This means that 9 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, more than all the natural gas from the OCS bill passed last Congress in the gulf, the Rome plateau has already gone through NEPA, that's all the environmental assessments, and is ready to lease. This position was not in the original Resources Committee bill and was added without any public hearings or very much debate on the House floor.

It also locks up 18 percent of Federal onshore production because it requires redundant environmental studies. I authored an amendment in the 2005 energy bill that was very helpful. Those who were opposed to us producing energy in America, and there's lots of those, all the environmental groups that had decided that we shouldn't

produce fossil fuels, that they're just not a part of our future, even though later I'll show you they almost have to be, this bill that we passed took away the redundant use of NEPA. NEPA's an environmental assessment that has to be done before we do much of anything.

What they did was this is akin to doing an environmental review for a parking lot with one car and then requiring a second environmental review for a second car in the lot. It makes companies who have leased land do an environmental assessment for the overall outlay or overlay of a proposal to where they're going to drill and produce. Then it does another environmental assessment for the roads they're going to build. Then it does another environmental assessment for every well they drill. These are many, many months long, sometimes year-long proposals that have to be developed on how the environment's going to do.

So the use of redundant NEPAs was a way of just stalling and stopping production, and we were pleased when we got that legislation passed in 2005, because in the West there were people who had leased land for 6 and 7 years and never been able to produce it. So we were able to help them.

This bill locks up 2 trillion barrels of American oil from the Western oil shale. The bill stops the leasing program for oil shale reserves on Federal land that hold enough oil supply for the United States for 228 years. This is more oil than the entire world has used since oil was discovered at Drake Well in my home district nearly 150 years ago and over twice as much oil as the entire OPEC cartel holds.

Meanwhile, China's developing their shale oil. Now we're in the process of developing how to get that oil released. It's like similar to Canada's tar sand oil. They've worked at that for a decade or more, and today they're producing 1.3 million barrels of oil just above the American border.

□ 1945

A lot of that oil is coming down here to be refined, thank the good Lord and thank Canada. But they are at 1.3 million barrels, and they hope to be at 3 to 3.5 million barrels at some point in time, but they have developed the ability to release that oil from the tar sands. It has been known to be there, and that is very similar to our shale oil.

Are we learning how to do it? Are we continuing to start and get some pilot projects going? No. The legislation before us will take it off the charts.

Well, we go on down here, it locks up 10 billion barrels of oil from the National Petroleum Reserve. Again, that's in Alaska. This bill will make it much harder to produce energy from Alaska's national oil reserve that was set aside in 1923 for energy for this country.

It has only recently begun to be explored starting with leases issued by

the Clinton administration. Under current law, the Department of Interior can extend the time of a lessee who might have begun to produce energy without fear of losing his lease.

Producing oil offshore is a complicated, expensive process. Sometimes if they have a lease of a certain period of time and they don't get their leasing done as quickly as they would like to, maybe for many reasons, caused by government, then they want to take away the right to renew that lease and extend it. Again, it would take that amount of oil, 10 million barrels, away from the marketplace.

Then we go down to breaking legitimate offshore energy contracts. We have contracts that were given for the deep water oil. We have companies that have spent \$2 billion producing energy out in the deep water, I mean, way out there several, many miles deep, very expensive, very costly, and they have not yet made a profit.

But there are those who think they should be paying royalty, even though they are not making a profit, and want to, with legislation in those contracts, or prevent them from having contracts again. That's not exactly how the American economic system works, but there are many here in Congress who want to confiscate those leases, even though they were legitimately given by the Clinton administration.

It also inflicts a \$15 million tax increase on American oil and gas companies. Why would we do that?

Well, there are those here who hate oil companies. A few years ago, Congress lowered the corporate tax rate for all manufacturers and processors, and that included oil producers and manufacturers. This no energy bill singles out the oil and gas industry, hiking their tax rate back up to 35 from 32 percent. So my refinery in Bradford, Pennsylvania in my district and my refinery in Warren, Pennsylvania, United in Warren, Pennsylvania, will pay 3 percent more corporate taxes than all the manufacturers and processors around them.

Will that help us to have more energy in America? No. Will it make it more expensive to produce American energy? Yes. Does it make sense in the big, long-term of energy production for America? Of course it doesn't.

Now, the next one down here, all the legislation ignores alternative energy like coal-to-liquids. It seems like coal has been shut out by many. Coal cannot be a part of our future, according to many, but we are the Saudi Arabia of coal.

The future of coal is not just using it to make electricity by burning it, but making liquids from it. During World War II, Germany was blockaded. They didn't have oil, so they made oil out of coal, and the Fischer-Tropsch method was one of them. There are several others now, but we need to, in this country, in my opinion, we need to be force-feeding some coal plants that are making liquid fuels, diesel and gasoline and jet fuel, out of coal.

We also need to be making natural gas out of coal. We need to have those plants online, refining that process so it can be cost-effective, because these plants cost from \$2- to \$3 billion apiece for just a medium-sized plant, a very heavy capital investment. They need some incentives, some loan guarantees, some help, to get these plants up and running to make sure that that's an alternative.

Why do we want to do that? We need to have as much energy available to Americans as we can get, all kinds of energy. We will get into that in a moment.

The more alternatives we have and the better supply we have, the more affordable the price will be. Today, those first charts I showed you with the prices skyrocketing, it's because we have a shortage of almost every kind of energy. So we believe that it's very important that we have coal-to-liquid.

Also, on the last one here, we raise false expectations by mandating that we have 15 percent renewables used, that's called the renewable standard, to make electricity. Now, I wish we could make 15 percent of our electricity from renewables. We are currently, on an average, nationally, at 3. Some States and some plants are doing better than that, but they have resources and the ability in their area to do that.

Not every part of the country can do wind and can do solar. The sun doesn't shine often enough or the wind doesn't blow regularly enough. Those are very specific areas where you can do that. And other places just don't have the renewable fuels that could be used.

We think the Federal standard of 15 percent will force companies into making electricity in very expensive ways and will skyrocket electric prices, especially in areas where you just don't have access to renewables. We believe the 2007 energy bills that are currently in the Senate and the House are no energy bills.

Now, there are some good conservation measures in there. There are some things in there that will stimulate renewables. But there is no energy there. It limits gas, it takes away oil, it has nothing for coal, and it makes it much more difficult to produce in existing fields.

Now, let's look at where we are at in the country today. Energy in America, these are 2005 charts, we still have them from the Energy Department but they haven't changed very much in the last year and a half. Forty percent of our energy is petroleum. That's oil. Twenty-three percent is natural gas. Twenty-three percent is coal. Now, this has been a growing figure, because 12 years ago, we took the lid off and we allowed an unlimited amount of natural gas to be used to make electricity. We use to limit that, that it could only be used for peak power, and so a very small amount was used. But now a lot of natural gas is used for electricity. In fact, about 20 percent of our electric

comes from natural gas. Nuclear has remained 8. The only reason it has remained 8 as electric use has went up is because we've squeezed more production out of our old plants than they were designed for. We have been upgrading them and working them overtime.

These plants are producing more electricity, but the bad news is that we need 35 new plants online by 2020 to stay at 8 percent. That's going to be a big job for America. So that means if we don't do that, we are going to have to substitute something else for the nuclear that's not going to grow maybe that fast. We have 35 companies with permits now, it takes 4 years to design them, 4 years to build them and with delays, that's at least a decade.

So if we don't have those online by 2020, then we will be looking at other ways to make more electricity that we are not making out of nuclear. Then we have hydroelectric. There is no growth here. This is a shrinking figure because actually we have the environmental groups that want to tear out the dams we have. They want nothing to do with damming up a waterway and using that to make electricity, so that's a figure that will continue to decline.

Now, biomass is the one that has been growing. That's wood waste. It's being used to make pellets to heat our homes. We have pellet stoves and pellet furnaces. That's the new fuel, so that's using waste wood, sawdust and trimmings that are ground up and made into pellets.

Now, biomass is also being used as topping the load on electric plants that are using coal. Because to meet air quality standards, if they use 80 percent coal and 20 percent wood waste, they can sometimes meet the air standards, depending on the coal they are burning that day. So wood waste is an add-on. Wood waste is going to be used down the road making ethanol, we believe.

But biomass is the one that's growing. We also, in the wooded areas, like my district is a big timber district, we're using wood waste to heat all of our dry kilns now that we use to dry our wood. We use to use natural gas and fuel oil for that. I shouldn't say all, but many. Because of the prices of natural gas and fuel oil, you can't hardly afford to use it anymore for that purpose. Many of the small factories where they process wood, they use the waste to heat the factory. So biomass is sort of finding its own market, especially in the areas where you have strong supplies of it.

Now, geothermal is a very good form of energy, but it's a costly investment. It's where you either drill into the water table, and then when you pump that up into your system, you take heat out of it in the wintertime, or you take coolness out of it in the summertime and send it back cooler or hotter.

Another way to do it is to put a big loop pipe system in your property. Then you get it below the frost line,

where it stays at 54 degrees all the time, and you take heat out of it in the wintertime, and you take coolness out of it in the summertime. You will use a fair amount of electricity with that because there are a lot of pumps, but this has been a pretty affordable type of energy, and it's renewable. You use some amount of electricity, but not as much as you would in direct electric heat.

Now, wind and solar are the ones that we are putting an awful lot of pressure on, and everybody is talking about. Wind also has its opponents. We had a bill proposed this year by the Resources Committee that actually stated that if you found a dead bird or bat at the foot of a windmill, it was a criminal offense. Now, that language has been removed, but somebody believed that, and I also serve on a committee where one of the gentleman there raises the issue there all the time with the Fish and Wildlife Service, why they are not arresting windmill operators where they find endangered species birds or bats at the foot of the windmill, that that should be a criminal offense. I have heard that argument each year now for a number of years. It has its opponents. I am not one of them. But wind has limited application. When the wind doesn't blow, you have to have a redundant supply. That takes us back up to natural gas, because natural gas is the generation where you can turn the plant off and on quickly. That's why we historically used it for peak power in the morning and night, when we're running our factories and we are using a lot at home, that's when the greatest demand for electricity was and that's when we turned on the gas generators. When the wind doesn't blow, you turn on the gas generator. When the sun doesn't shine and you don't have solar coming, you turn on the gas generator.

Now, what I think the American people and too many Members of Congress don't understand is how small they are. Wind currently is 0.12 of a percent. Solar is 0.06 of a percent. Let's say we could double them every 3 years. This would be 0.24, and this would be 0.12. Let's say 3 more years we double it again, and then we would be 0.48 and 0.24. We are still a very small fraction and now we are already 6 years down the road. And, you know, to get to 1 percent would take decades.

So we have to realize, as good as these are, and as much as we want them to be a part of our energy supply, they are limited in the ability they can produce. So those are the facts sometimes that sort of get lost.

Now, another issue I want to mention is the new issue here, the issue that's getting a lot more attention here in this House and in the Senate is climate change. Climate change is the fear that the use of fossil fuels and putting CO₂ into the air is harming our environment and causing the surface of the Earth to warm.

Now, there are many scientists that don't agree with that. I know the sun

scientist from MIT doesn't agree with that. She has a pretty strong history where when the sun hits us directly, we warm for a decade or so. Then when the sun is hitting us a glancing blow, we cool. But there are those today that are convinced that it's CO₂. That's what we breathe out. We breathe out CO₂ and we breathe in the oxygen. The plants take in CO₂ and they process oxygen that we breathe. It's that even exchange. But there are those who feel that we have too much CO₂ in the air and are really wanting to treat CO₂ as a pollutant, and they are really somewhat being successful with that, which I think is going to be harmful.

Now, I am not saying we shouldn't be observing it, I am not saying we shouldn't be working on how to sequester carbon as we use fuels, that we shouldn't be working on all those things, but I look for us to put on measures that will raise energy prices up to 30 percent or more because of having to deal with the carbon issue. The carbon issue makes it very difficult for coal to participate, and that's what we own the most of. And it makes it very difficult for petroleum. That's what we don't have a lot of but we use a lot of for our transportation system.

Then when that happens, we will be putting great pressure on natural gas, because it has no NO_x or SO_x, very clean burning, and it has a third of the CO₂ of any other fossil fuel. It will move to gas if we force companies to measure how much CO₂ they are putting into the air, and it will decimate certain industries. We probably won't make lime and cement in this country. I guess what worries me is when we don't manufacture anything in America.

The current natural gas prices have caused us to lose 50 percent of the fertilizer industry in the last 2 years. The petrochemical industry is in the process of building all their new plants offshore, where natural gas is a fraction. That's another point I want to make is most Americans are not aware that our natural gas prices are the highest in the world.

How is that? Well, it's not a world price. When oil has been \$80, and that's a scary figure to me, and nobody is talking about it now. It's just kind of like, well, it's \$80, but natural gas prices, when we have \$80 oil the whole world has \$80 oil, so competitively it keeps us even.

But when natural gas prices are two, three, four, five times higher here than in other countries, it gives those countries a huge advantage. I have been promoting that we must, as a first priority, open up natural gas.

Before I go to that, I just want to mention, here is the chart that shows us our oil imports as we continue to become dependent on foreign, unstable countries.

□ 2000

And we're up here right now. This is of course old data. And we're up here

right now at 66, and we're going up 2 percent a year and we'll soon be at 70 percent.

Now, is that bad? Well, a decade or so ago, when oil was much cheaper, you know, over in the 30, 20 range, and back here when it was below 20, and I remember when it was back here at 10. Now, these are the average prices per year. So during this period of time we've had \$10 oil a number of times. But then in the year average, so this chart is the annual average price, so it doesn't show the \$10 level. But when oil was 20 and \$30 a barrel, it was much more affordable. And a lot of people said, well, we should be using their oil and saving ours. Well, we did that. Well, when you get up here to where you're at \$80 oil, it seems to me that that's pretty concerning. And how do we compete as a country when we have \$80 oil ongoingly and could have spikes from that?

Now, we believe that, I want to go back to this chart here. We believe it's time to open up the OCS. And our proposal opens it up for natural gas only. It's a bill that we now have 165 cosponsors of. It's called the NEED Act. And it also sets aside funds for a lot of very good purposes. But it would open up both of our coastlines and the rest of the gulf for natural gas production only.

Now, the States currently control 3 miles. We're prepared to give them, with this legislation, 50 miles. And they could open that if they chose to, but they would have to pass a law asking for it to be open. The next 50 miles would be open automatically, but they have the right, within 12 months, to pass a bill to say they don't want to produce. So we have States' rights for up to 100 miles, where now they just have it out to 3 miles. Then the second hundred miles would just be purely open.

So we believe that making natural gas available and stabilizing natural gas prices, we can preserve the petrochemical industry in this country, we can preserve the polymers and plastic industry in this country, we can keep what steel and aluminum manufacturing and bending and shaping companies we have left.

I predict that if we don't stabilize natural gas prices for home heating, for business heating, and for production of products, we will be making bricks and glass in nearby South America where gas is a buck and a quarter, when our average retail price will be 11 or \$12. Those companies will go there and save millions of dollars in energy costs, and they can ship those bulky products like bricks and glass to us in a boat in a day or two. Not very far down here to South America.

We have enough competition with China and India. Their natural gas prices are way lower than ours, maybe a third of ours, and so they have not only the cheap labor advantage, we're giving them an energy advantage.

And I guess the part that I've struggled with in this Congress, Mr. Speak-

er, is it seems like Americans are just immune to the impacts of high energy prices. Now, this winter, as I started, when we start heating our homes, we will feel pain. The poorest among us will struggle to heat their homes this winter, especially when they live in older housing that's not as tight, doesn't have the new windows.

I found it interesting this year, I'll just step on a sidebar here for a minute. The Speaker of the House wanted us to have a less carbon imprint for the Capitol, and so she's mandated that we switch from using less coal to heat the Capitol complex and more natural gas. Well, that costs us an extra \$3 million because gas is much more expensive, and it sets a precedent out there to all of our local governments and State governments and all the other departments of government that they ought to do the same. And I see universities doing it now, switching to clean natural gas, spending more money.

But what we didn't do is this building and all the buildings we work in still have single-pane windows that let the heat out or the cold in. It would seem to me that the first thing we should have done was to put modern windows in our buildings to keep the heat in and keep the cold out, because there's a huge difference between a single-pane window and a triple-pane window, whether it keeps the heat in and the cold out or the cool in in the summer time and the heat out. So windows should have been our first measure. But no, we're putting in the little curly-cue light bulbs in all our offices now, by mandate, by law. I'm not opposed to them. I have some in my house. But they unfortunately are all made in China. They're not made in this country. And so that's another part; we are mandating China products to light our facilities around here. And we're now forcing natural gas to be used instead of coal, which will cost us more but will send a precedent around the world. And if everybody, if all the governments do that, all the agencies do that, all the educational facilities do that, we'll put tremendous pressure on natural gas.

Now, our natural gas bills, I explained that and I'll just explain it again. The first 50 miles will be controlled by the State, only produced there if they pass a bill and ask to be opened up. The second 50 miles will be open, but the States have a right to close it with legislation if they can pass it and their Governor signs it, the second hundred miles would be open for natural gas only, not oil.

Now, we also have some things that we think are pretty important in this bill. And as you look there, we're going to give \$150 billion of the royalties to the States. That's an incentive. So as they produce in all the coastal States, they will then have the ability to have some of those monies for their reserves, and we think that's important.

Then we have \$100 billion for the government. The Federal Government will

get \$100 billion utilizing the resource on the Outer Continental Shelf over a period of years. And we're going to have \$32 billion set aside for energy research and production, real money, not a few \$100 million, but billions of dollars to do the essential research and develop the renewables that can help us in the future. And \$32 billion set aside in a fund for carbon capture and sequestration research. That's what we're talking about today. Not talking about it. We would get affordable energy for Americans to heat our homes and run our businesses, and we'd get \$32 billion over a period of time to figure out how to deal with the CO₂ issue, if that's our number one problem.

Now, I think affordable energy is a far bigger problem than CO₂. I know the pain that's going to be felt in this country for the home heating costs and the small business costs, but the job losses as we, and we have the potential of losing millions of jobs in America, more going to foreign countries because of our energy prices. That's the concern, because when the working man loses his chance to make a living, how does he afford to heat his home? How does he afford to have a home?

Now, we have some areas that have been wanting cleanup money for a long time, and the first one here is the Chesapeake Bay. They've wanted \$20 billion, and their proposal says they need \$19 billion to clean up the Chesapeake Bay, and the State's put a little bit of money, the Feds put in a little every year, but it's kind of trickling in. This would provide them over a period of time the money they need to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.

Great Lakes, the need, their studies have all shown, their organization's the same. They need \$20 billion to clean up the Great Lakes. Well, this bill would provide them with the \$20 billion to clean up the Great Lakes.

Then the Everglades. You know, we've been putting money in the Everglades every year. Well, this would give them \$12 billion for Everglade restoration.

We've been talking about the Colorado River Basin restoration. Well, this would give them \$12 billion for restoring the Colorado River Basin.

And the San Francisco Bay restoration. This would give them \$12 billion for the San Francisco Bay.

Now, the issue that I always find confounding here, every year we give more and more money for LIHEAP and weatherization, and rightfully so, because the reason America has the highest energy costs in the world is Congress and the administrations that have been running our government, both parties, we have not, either party, adequately went after energy. I think my party is more on the right track than the other party, but neither party has done what we need, and that's why we're in trouble today.

And then when we're in trouble and it costs so much to heat our homes, we have to help the poor. We also have to

save energy by helping the poor weatherize their homes, because they don't have the money to spend to save money. So we put \$10 billion into LIHEAP and weatherization to help Americans to heat their homes.

I'm going to go back to the first chart here. World oil prices. Here we are, as I started, we're now clear up here, clear up off the chart, \$80. All week long, in fact, it's been as high as \$83. Have we heard much about it on television? No. Hardly mentioned. Do we hear about it in the Presidential debates? No. Has it been any special meetings here in Congress? No. Has there been any discussion in the last few weeks about the energy bills that are languishing to be considered and need to be conferred? No. It's like it doesn't matter.

Mr. Speaker, it does matter. \$80 oil. I've talked to experts in Federal agencies that have dealt with energy all their life. They told me in a private meeting that they thought \$60 to \$70 oil for a long period of time, or for, you know, a decent period of time would stall our economy. And then we hit \$70 oil for quite a while, and then it got up around \$75, and it still hasn't stalled our economy. And they said they know we're getting close to that price point. They don't know where it's at, but they don't think it's far away. And folks, when that happens, it takes a long time to come back, because here's the problem.

As we go back to the big chart that I had, I want to put it back up here. The problem that we have with energy, to open up the Outer Continental Shelf to get gas, and then maybe at some point oil on out, it's 10 years from the day you pass a bill till you have any quantity of energy. If we do new nuclear, from the day you put some new incentives in or figure out some ways to entice companies to invest or government helps invest, you're 10 years away from production. Everything we're doing, and we don't know when. We hope it's soon, but we don't know when wind and solar will be a real mark on the chart, will be percentages of our energy portfolio. There are people who think we are right up there. They've been saying that for a decade. And nobody's holding them back. They're highly subsidized.

I haven't talked about ethanol. Ethanol is the one that's happening with petroleum. You know, we now use 6.3 billion gallons of ethanol this year. There's almost as many plants in production being built as there are in production, that in a year or two will double our ethanol. And that's from corn. The price of corn has gotten high. Now, our food prices are rising, and the cost of making ethanol's very high. It's almost an energy swap. I'm not against it because it's American made, but there is some danger in putting too much of your portfolio when you're using food to make your fuel.

And the cost, what do we use to make ethanol? Natural gas. Huge amounts of

natural gas. If we can break the hydrogen link, what do we use to make hydrogen? We use natural gas. Biodiesel, we use natural gas and soybeans. Ethanol, natural gas and corn. Natural gas is the one, the only one that gives us hope. It can be a bridge. Natural gas could replace a third of our auto fleet and really cut back our need for oil. But there's no push to do that. It would burn cleaner. The only problem with natural gas in vehicles is you can't drive as far. You can't have a big tank. But all your short-haul vehicles, all your taxicabs, all your small engines, all your local tractors, a lot of your construction vehicles that are nearby and can be fueled up every night, they could all be on natural gas. That's an exchange of carburetion. Our current engines will burn natural gas. And so natural gas, if it was more affordable, if we got out on the Outer Continental Shelf and produced it and we had lots of it, it's our hope till renewables grow to where they can really help us.

My concern is there's no sense of urgency here. Congress does not have a sense of urgency. The White House does not have a sense of urgency. Where do we get our oil? Eighty percent of the oil today is owned by governments, not companies, Third World countries, very few democratic governments, dictators, unstable governments, they not only own the oil, they're producing it. And when government produces, it's never efficient. It's like Mexico.

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Mexico is loaded with energy. We actually export some gas and oil to Mexico because they just can't get out of their own way. Their government is so inefficient and so ineffective, they can't get it out of the ground and get it refined. They actually buy some from us.

The most energy we buy from any one country is Canada. Thank God, to the north of us, if Canada really produces gas and oil and they are reaching into the new fields with the oil sands and so forth, they're moving. They are an environmentally sensitive country, but they are moving forward with their energy production. And, fortunately, we benefit from that.

But to the south of us, 80 percent of the oil is owned by unstable countries. They not only own it, they're producing it, they're refining it, and they're marketing it. And what they are doing that is very troublesome is they are skimming off the profits, instead of putting it back into the business, and using it for all their social programs and for people to live wealthy life-styles, and their energy patches are often a mess. Many of them have kicked out Big Oil. Big Oil has been chased out of country after country. Their investments have been captured. I could name a whole lot of them, Nigeria, El Salvador, Russia. Country after country has nationalized their energy, chased the big boys out that actually had the expertise, and

are now running their own refineries. We have 80 percent of our oil coming from countries that are not run like a business. And they are not democracies. They are not efficient. And so the supply of petroleum could decrease quickly if two or three of those countries get in any kind of trouble or would have any kind of an explosion in their major pipelines or refineries or sending stations.

Terrorism is a threat to energy. Terrorists could put this country in serious straits with little explosives in the right places. It's a scary world.

I guess the part that bothers me tonight is as we approach this season, this heating season for America, Congress ought to have on its agenda that we are going to provide affordable energy for Americans by producing adequate amounts of energy so we can bring the prices down.

Prices aren't set by big oil companies. Everyone blames them. Prices are set by the stock market. And every day they bid on what the price of natural gas is going to be, what the price of oil is going to be, what the price of fuel oil is going to be, what the price of kerosene is going to be. Those are all set by traders on the market. And if it shows there's a little shortage, they run the price up, and that helps add to the price. Fear of a shortage.

Well, we know there is an upcoming shortage of oil and gas in America. And we also know that we are doing very little. China is building a coal power plant every 5 days. They are building a nuclear plant every month. They are building the largest hydrodams known in America. They are buying up oil and gas reserves from countries whom we have historically purchased from. And I'm not going to be surprised when we pick up the paper one of these days and we read where one of the major countries that America has been buying a lot of oil from, that China has bought their whole supply. They are going to be producing oil 50 miles off the Florida coast in companionship with Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, America needs to wake Congress up. We need to wake Congress up. We need to wake this administration up. We need to have a sense of urgency that America produces the energy we need. We are still 86 percent fossil fuel, 8 percent nuclear, and 6 percent renewables, and biomass and hydroelectric are more than 5. And that leaves geothermal, wind, and solar, less than 1 percent, and 83 percent of that is geothermal.

America needs to understand the concern that is out there about having available, affordable energy. We have always taken it for granted. It is no longer going to just happen. America needs to be debating an energy policy that will bring oil and gas prices down; will take advantage of using clean coal technology, coal to liquids, coal to gas; expanding the use of clean nuclear; no CO₂; looking harder at hydroelectric; continuing to grow biomass, geothermal, wind and solar, ethanol and

biodiesel as fast as we can. We can't do it quick enough, Mr. Speaker. America needs to put the pedal to the metal. We need to produce energy for Americans so they can afford to heat their homes and we can afford to run our businesses so Americans can have jobs to support their families.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONNELLY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is an honor to come to the floor to have the 30-Something Working Group. And as you know, we have been coming to the floor now some 4 years strong, 4½ years, bringing to light issues before the Congress and also the American people on what's happening under the Capitol dome.

We have been doing a lot of legislation recently in this 110th Congress that I think should definitely be highlighted every time we have the opportunity to do so. We have a number of pieces of legislation that are in the pipeline right now that are being sent to the White House that the President has threatened to veto. These are priorities that the American people voted for to move in a new direction; need it be in Iraq; need it be domestically; or need it be making sure that we run this government in a fiscal way, one that all Americans, Democrats, Republicans, and independents alike, would like to have.

Good government is good. And it's important that we encourage not only the passage of good pieces of legislation but also make sure that we encourage the President to do the right thing, even though he may say from time to time that he is not going to do things, that he will sign pieces of legislation like the Student Loan Reduction Act, which is so very, very important. It cuts student loan rates in half.

I want to just commend the Members here in this Chamber, especially in the majority, that pushed the President to sign that bill. I want to thank all of the college kids and students and parents and grandparents that are having to help their young people pay back their student loans and to being able to cut that interest rate in half.

I am joined tonight by two of my, and I can say this, bestest friends in Congress: Mrs. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES, the chairwoman of the Ethics Committee and a colleague that I serve with on the Ways and Means Committee; and also my good friend TIM RYAN from Youngstown, Ohio, who is a member of the Appropriations Committee that considers himself a very important part of what we do here. As you know, Ways and Means, we find the ways and means, and he says he has appropriated to make sure it all goes to the right place, Mr. Speaker.

I guess what we usually do, and what I am going to do, without really making opening comments because we like to have a discussion, I want to allow my two colleagues here to share some of their thoughts with us. But before I do that, today, as you know, in the 30-Something Working Group, we shed light on what is happening in Iraq. We know that we have a number of our men and women that are there in harm's way. We know that we have men and women in Afghanistan and also deployed throughout the world.

But as of today, October 3, the total deaths have been 3,808. The total number of wounded in action and returning to duty within 72 hours has been 15,432. The number wounded in action and not returning to duty within 72 hours has been 12,577. The total number of wounded is 27,753.

I want to make sure, Mr. Speaker, and we want to make sure, the 30-Something Working Group, that Members know what is going on in the Middle East and that we bring this to their attention and read it into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that we can every day move towards a position that would take our combat troops out of harm's way and replace them with Iraqi troops. We can provide technical support, but I think that is very important.

With that, I yield to my colleague Mrs. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. I am so happy, Mr. Speaker, to have an opportunity to be on the floor with two of my favorite Congress people, TIM RYAN and KENDRICK MEEK. Over the past few years, these two young men have shown such great leadership in the 30-Something Working Group, and I am just proud to be counted among the 30-Something group even though all of us know I am not 30-something, though I think I manage well anyway.

It is just so significant that we have an opportunity to be here this evening to talk about an issue that is so very, very important to all of America: our children.

A child. You think about when your baby is born or before your baby is born, how important it is to you to contemplate that he or she be of good health. More important than it be a boy or a girl, it's important that they come here and you start counting, do they have all their fingers? Do they have all their toes? Is their heart working? Are their eyes open? Can they hear? Can they see? And for some parents, it becomes a difficult moment because all those wonderful things that you would hope would be the case are not.

But moving along, regardless, every parent wants their child to have access to good health care. And one of the wonderful things about this program called SCHIP, State Children's Health Insurance Program, is that it will provide health insurance for all of our children. And who could not want that?

Our President. Our President has made a decision that SCHIP is not