

American people that big oil companies are victims of international crude oil prices and have little to say in the final price of gasoline.

API insists a price of a gallon of gas is directly related to the price of a barrel of crude oil. Yet before the election we have a 60-cent per gallon drop in gas prices and only a 10 percent drop in the price of crude.

Consumer advocates have accused oil companies of purposely reducing gas prices in the months before the election to help Republican candidates. Earlier this month, National Public Radio featured a representative from the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights who argued oil companies intentionally reduced the price of gas to influence the November elections.

After the elections, gas prices have increased an average of 15 cents a gallon. Oil companies were able to significantly reduce the price of gas in September-October, then increase the price right after the election, without a corresponding change in the price of crude oil.

This is not the first time oil companies have been accused of manipulating gas prices. Internal memos from several oil companies written in the 1990s have revealed that big oil companies limit refinery capacity in the United States to control the supply, cost, and price of gasoline.

After Hurricane Katrina, the government found that refiners, wholesalers, and retailers charged significantly higher prices that were not the result of either increased costs or market trends. However, because there is no Federal energy price-gouging law in place, the Federal Trade Commission cannot even prosecute this price-gouging practice.

For too long, oil companies have benefited from tax breaks, government subsidies, and lack of oversight. At the same time, oil companies have made record profits at the expense of the American people. Next week, the U.S. House of Representatives will consider legislation to end the tax breaks and special subsidies for Big Oil.

Rather than helping the oil companies' bottom line, these tax breaks and subsidies will be reallocated to promote alternative energy sources to end our Nation's addiction to oil.

Later this year, I look forward to having an open and honest debate on my legislation to create a Federal law against price gouging for gasoline, natural gas, propane, and other fuel. I will continue to work towards greater oversight for oil and gas trading, especially off-market trades, known as OTC trades.

I will be reintroducing my legislation, the Prevent Unfair Manipulation of Prices Act, to improve oversight of oil trades and strengthen penalties for traders who attempt to illegally manipulate these markets.

Under the Republican leadership, the oil companies enjoyed record profits

while Americans suffered with record high gas prices, minimal oversight, and price manipulation. The American people have now chosen a new direction, electing Democrat majorities in both the House and the Senate.

I look forward to being able to address high energy prices, to stop price gouging, market manipulation, and to stand up for the American consumer.

SALUTE TO STEELERS' ALL PRO RUNNING BACK AND LEGENDARY COACH DICK HOAK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the great contribution Coach Dick Hoak has made to professional athletics, the game of football, the Pittsburgh Steelers, and the people of western Pennsylvania.

Coach Dick Hoak recently announced his retirement from the Steelers' organization on January 1 of this year. As he ends an impressive career, Dick Hoak can look back on his 45 years of history as part of the Steelers' organization. This is an unprecedented run and a shining example of consistency in a business best known for its instability rather than longevity with one team.

The first 10 of Dick Hoak's 45-year tenure with the Steelers were not spent on the sidelines but, instead, on the playing field. Dick Hoak was drafted by the Steelers in 1961, after an impressive high school career in football, basketball, and baseball that included a WPIAL football championship, and a single-game scoring record of 39 points and playing 4 years for Joe Paterno's Penn State Nittany Lions, where he led the team to a Liberty Bowl victory and was named the MVP.

Throughout his playing career with the Steelers, Dick Hoak time and time again showed he was a talented athlete and a dedicated teammate. He led his team in rushing three times and today is the fifth ranked rusher in Steeler history, with 3,965 yards rushing. Dick Hoak also accumulated an impressive 146 receptions, 33 touchdowns, and a Pro Bowl appearance.

For many players, the culmination of such an impressive record would have been enough on which to end a career. However, Dick Hoak, his commitment to Pittsburgh and the Steelers would not end there. Only one year after retiring from the National Football League, Dick Hoak turned down an assistant coaching job at the University of Pittsburgh and rejoined the Steelers' organization, this time as an assistant coach under Hall of Fame Coach Chuck Noll. During this time, Coach Hoak coached the running backs, including the great Franco Harris, through four Super Bowl victories, a championship legacy he would later recapture under Coach Bill Cowher.

Under Dick Hoak's leadership as an assistant coach, the Steelers domi-

nated the league in rushing yardage. Over the 15 seasons Dick Hoak coached for Bill Cowher alone, the Steelers rushed for over 30,000 yards and led the league in rushing three of those 15 seasons. His excellent coaching also added in no small part to the Steelers' Super Bowl win last year. The Super Bowl win not only capped Dick Hoak's career; it made Hoak one of three people in the Steelers' organization, and possibly the only coach in NFL history, to have six Super Bowl appearances and five Super Bowl rings with one NFL team.

Throughout his accomplished career in football, Dick Hoak never let Pennsylvania out of his thoughts. Of course, over his long career, Coach Hoak was offered positions away from his home State. However, his commitment to create a stable environment for his family, and his undying loyalty to his team and the owners of the Steelers, the Rooney family, kept him in Pennsylvania. He never left to accept an offensive coordinator's job with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers; he never left the Rooney family to coach the USFL's Pittsburgh Maulers. Coach Hoak put his family first and remained devoted, loyal, and committed to his team in western Pennsylvania.

Coach Hoak was born in Jeanette, Pennsylvania, and continues to live in nearby Greensburg in a house he has owned since his early days in coaching. His commitment to the Pittsburgh Steelers gave his family stability and western Pennsylvania a steady hand at the helm of a winning offense. Now that his storied career with the Steelers is behind him, Dick Hoak can look forward to another winning team: his family. I know his wife, Lynn, his children Kelly, Katie and Rich, and his seven grandchildren, including my nephews Michael, Jonathan, and Daniel Shuster, are happy to have more time with their Pap-Pap.

Dick Hoak represents the best attributes of sportsmanship, hard work, and commitment. Those are the values that translate from the football field to everyday life, and he embodied them with class. Not only that, Dick Hoak represents the American Dream. He is an American success story who shows if you work hard enough and remain dedicated to your goals, you can succeed beyond what you thought possible, into excellence and legend.

I am happy to say congratulations on a great career, and thank you for being there when we needed you, Coach Hoak.

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IN SUPPORT OF EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WELCH of Vermont). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, today was a remarkable day in this new 110th

Congress. This House in a bipartisan way came together, under the leadership of Congresswoman Diana DeGette of Colorado and Michael Castle of Delaware, to pass a bipartisan measure with a strong vote, 253-174, a bill that would expand the stem cell research in this country and lead to great cures, cures which promise to help people turn around their lives, people that have suffered through debilitating and life-threatening diseases.

Stem cell research holds the promise to help those who suffer from heart disease, various cancers, diabetes, Alzheimer's, kidney disease, liver disease, Parkinson's, to name a few.

Breakthroughs in research are happening every day. But with the bill passed today in this new Congress, even more can be done to provide hope and lifesaving cures to the millions of Americans affected by these diseases.

While there are ethical issues surrounding medical research of any kind, I do not believe that we should unreasonably restrict new medical research and prevent Americans from receiving lifesaving treatments. President Bush's current restrictions are unreasonable and arbitrary.

I believe it is imperative that legislation concerning stem cell research contain strong ethical standards over the conduct of research, and the bill passed today provides such high standards.

Many people have asked me about my best day during my first term in the 109th Congress that just concluded. I can say, without question, the day was May 24, 2005, because it was a day that gave the best hope for lifesaving cures for so many. Those hopes were, unfortunately, dashed when President Bush vetoed the bill, H.R. 810 in the last Congress.

We have come together again, passed this bill with an even stronger bipartisan vote, and I expect it will go to the Senate and pass there again with another strong bipartisan vote. And I would urge the President to reconsider his position. So many people's lives, the quality of lives for their families depend on this research continuing.

This bill, as I said, contained detailed ethical standards on this type of research, and that is an important part of this legislation going forward. This issue has united Americans and actually united this Congress in powerful ways and with a strong voice.

My home State of Missouri has taken a lead in this debate. Expanding stem cell research is supported by 72 percent of Americans from across the political spectrum, and that goes for my home State of Missouri. This past November, Missourians came out to the polls in record numbers in support of stem cell research that holds the potential for lifesaving cures. Our State passed a ballot initiative that ensures Missourians will have access to any stem cell research and cures that are allowed under Federal law and available to other Americans. And it also included strong ethical standards for conducting that research.

Acting in response to the countless Americans who want a new direction in this new Congress, we have begun to respond. Today, the people's House actually acted on behalf of the American people and generations to come. Members from both sides of the aisle came together in support of the pursuit of lifesaving cures and passed H.R. 3, the Stem Cell Research Act.

It is my strong hope that the message of hope sent by both the American people and their Representatives will be heard by President Bush. By signing this vital legislation now into law, the President can provide the hope of potential lifesaving cures to millions of Americans.

WEST VALLEY DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KUHLE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KUHLE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to make the House aware of a serious problem in my Congressional district in upstate New York.

The West Valley Demonstration Project, which is located here, was created by Congress in 1980 to solidify in glass the nuclear waste left over from a variety of sources, including defense atomic waste. This project successfully vitrified all of the high-level waste on the site over the next 2 decades, placing the waste in safe gas containers ready to store in a permanent storage facility.

West Valley is unique in the Department of Energy system in that the site is owned by the State of New York, but the operation is funded 90 percent by the Federal Government and 10 percent by the State of New York. While there is little question that the waste is, in large part, Federal waste, the Federal Government is not owning up to its responsibility to completely clean the site so that it can be returned to the community of West Valley and reused for economic development opportunities.

There is now a grave problem that threatens all of us. Some of the radiation has leaked into the ground water and formed a plume, as shown here on chart 2. The plume continues to grow and threatens streams on the site. These streams feed into larger tributaries which empty into the largest body of fresh water in the world. I repeat that: the largest body of fresh water in the world, the Great Lakes. Lake Erie's shores are only 25 miles away. Better shown on this chart. West Valley Demonstration Project, the creeks to Lake Erie.

It was estimated that the cleanup of this plume would require the removal of 4 million cubic feet of soil just a few years ago. Current estimates suggest 30 million cubic feet of soil would need to be removed to eliminate the threat if done today.

The Federal Government has simply moved the ropes around the affected

area. Rather than cleaning it up, a few years ago when the problem was first noticed, the Department of Energy has roped off the area, allowed it to grow and grow and grow.

I will be introducing legislation once again during this term of Congress, Mr. Speaker, to direct the Department of Energy to take immediate possession of the Western New York Nuclear Service Center at West Valley and remediate the entire site, including this dangerous plume. The Department of Energy would be responsible for all costs of the clean up, as New York State neither has the resources nor the ability to do so. This is a Federal problem that requires Federal attention.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission would be given authority to regulate activities of the Department of Energy at West Valley and consult with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in executing the remediation.

The West Valley Remediation Act will replace and supersede the West Valley Demonstration Project Act of 1980, if adopted, but does not reduce any of the act's decontamination or decommissioning provisions.

Appropriations of roughly \$95 million per year would be authorized to implement the act, and additional appropriations would also be authorized to benefit the community.

The Department of Energy is then precluded from transporting any additional hazardous or radioactive waste to the site for the purpose of treatment or disposal.

Most importantly, the site would be cleaned and returned to its natural state, and the Great Lakes would no longer be threatened, taking care of a potential international environmental hazard of monumental proportions.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you and my colleagues will work with me and with the Senate to find a solution to this problem.

END THE OCCUPATION IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I began to circulate a plan among Members of Congress to establish a path towards the United States exiting Iraq.

As we know, the administration is prepared to escalate the conflict. They intend to increase troop levels to an unprecedented number without establishing an ending date.

It is important for Congress to oppose the troop surge, but that is not enough. We must respond powerfully to take steps to end the occupation, close U.S. bases in Iraq and bring our troops home. These steps are necessary preconditions to the U.S. extricating itself from Iraq through the establishment of an international security and peacekeeping force.