

me to bring this real and workable bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, the voters have demanded an end to President Bush's occupation of Iraq. They don't want more talk, they want a real plan. They want a plan that will bring our troops home. This is our mandate, and this is the oath we swore to yesterday.

HONORING ANATOLE MILUNAS

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, it is great to be back in session and back in Washington. I look forward to a very interesting new Congress.

One of the great benefits of being a Member is the opportunity to talk about our national treasure, which is our citizens. We just lost one who became a good friend of mine, doesn't live in my Congressional district, is from the state of Illinois, name of Tony Milunas.

Now, Tony, is the story of a lot of post World War II era emigres who came from the former captive nations, the former Eastern Bloc countries that immigrated here, became active citizens, not only supported this great country, served in the military, but also was very involved in the 50 years of totalitarian ruling of the Eastern Bloc countries and helped bring freedom to those countries. With that I am going to give a little background on Tony and mention how he was very important in my life.

Anatole Milunas, "Tony," as we knew him, was born August 3, 1936 in the City of Sauliai, Lithuania. During World War II, he left Lithuania to escape the second Soviet occupation and the subsequent 50 years of terror. While in exile in 1946, he finished high school and began studying for a degree in technology in Darmstadt, Germany.

After he immigrated to the United States, he continued his schooling and graduated with a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois. During the Korean War, he served in the United States Army, stationed in Germany as a translator and adviser to a staff officer.

He actively participated in the presidential election of President Ronald Reagan and President George Herbert Walker Bush, and has been a strong supporter of the Illinois Republican Party. From 1979 to 1985, he was a chairman of the Lithuanian American Republican National Federation, and from 1994 to 2006, Mr. Milunas was the chairman of the Lithuanian American Republican League in Illinois.

He died December 23, 2006. He left a widow, Dana, and two sons, Vytenis and Rimas, two good Lithuanian names, their families and many relatives here in Lithuania as well as friends and so many associates. He leaves behind a lasting legacy.

Now, I met Tony way back in 1992 when he looked at the family name of

politicians running for office, and my colleagues here, who I have served with for many years, know that I have focused some of my extra time on Baltic issues, which is Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Not because I have a strong Baltic number of citizens in my district, and, in fact, it is very little, but Shimkus is ethnically Lithuanian.

Tony, seeing that name said, and being Republican, says, oh, I found a guy who will help me remember the persecution of the Baltic countries and help bring freedom, NATO enlargement, EU ascension to the Baltic countries.

He adopted me, in essence, and he encouraged me to not only be involved here on the floor, but really be involved in what for me is four generations removed. He is one generation, I am four generations.

Tony gave me this photo back on October 18, 2002, to the Honorable John Shimkus, we are proud to have you as an honorary member while we continue the Reagan legacy, Lithuanian Republican League of Illinois, Anatole Milunas. This is a photo of President Reagan when he is campaigning in Chicago. Now I am a down-stater, I am more by St. Louis and what we call southern Illinois. This was a picture Tony was very, very proud of. This was at an ethnic festival, then candidate Reagan was there. Tony handed him this bumper sticker that said, "I love Lithuanians," and here is President Reagan holding this up.

As we know, it was President Reagan that was in Berlin and said, Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall, which is all part of the fall of the Soviet empire and the freeing of millions of people in what we call the captive nations.

I was glad to play a small part in the movement to enlarge NATO and bring in the former captive nations that love democracy and freedom, willing to take and pay the sacrifice, transform their militaries and be true allies.

One of the reasons why I was able to do that is because of the mentorship, the friendship, the love, the compassion of this U.S. citizen who was born in Sauliai, Lithuania, who came to this country with nothing, lived the American dream, was a great citizen, but had an appreciation for his homeland.

GAS PRICES

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the new Democratic leadership that will finally allow the U.S. House of Representatives to address high energy prices. Under prior Republican leadership in the House, the oil industry enjoyed years of record profits, record high gas prices and minimal oversight and price manipulation.

Curiously, in September and October of 2006, just before the November elec-

tions, gas prices dropped an average of \$.60 per gallon compared to the record high prices of last summer. This \$.60 drop in gas prices occurred despite the fact that there were pipeline disruptions in Alaska and indications that OPEC would cut oil production. Department of Energy's statistics show us that while gas prices dropped an average of \$.60 a gallon in September and October, the crude oil price only dropped 10 cents a gallon.

If you listened to National Public Radio this week, you would have heard that there is evidence that the oil companies intentionally influence gas price fluctuations, and a \$.60 drop was done just before the election to influence the November elections.

For years, the American Petroleum Institute, the oil companies' main lobbying group, has spent millions of dollars on public relations campaigns to convince the American people that gas prices are a direct result of crude oil prices, not oil company practices. But yet we have a 60 percent drop in gas prices, but only a 10 percent drop in the price of crude.

Ignoring their own PR, oil companies were able to significantly reduce the gas prices in September and October without a corresponding decrease in their crude oil price. Some consumer advocates, such as the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights, have accused oil companies of purposefully reducing gas prices in the months before the election to help Republican candidates.

Since November, gas prices have already increased an average of 15 cents a gallon. This is not the first time the oil companies have been accused of attempting to manipulate markets for their benefit.

Internal memos from several oil companies written in the 1990s have revealed that the big oil companies have worked to limit refinery capacity here in the United States, allowing these companies to control the supply and cost of gasoline.

In May of 2006, the Federal Trade Commission released its report titled Investigation of Gasoline Price Manipulation and Post-Katrina Gasoline Price Increases. In this report, the Federal Trade Commission found that after Hurricane Katrina refiners, wholesalers and retailers charged significantly higher prices that did not result from either increased costs or market friends.

FTC Commissioner John Liebowitz, in a statement on the report, acknowledged that, and I quote, "that the behavior of many market participants, on balance, leaves much to be desired."

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Democrats have repeatedly urged the House Republican leadership to protect America's pocketbooks and not that of Big Oil. Nonetheless, the Republican leadership refused to take action last fall on high gas prices. The American people have now chosen a new direction with Democrats in charge.

During the first 100 legislative hours of this, the 110th Congress, the House of Representatives will consider legislation to end the tax breaks and special subsidies for oil companies. For too long, oil companies have benefited from weak royalty laws, tax breaks and subsidies, at the same time making record profits at the expense of the American people.

Rather than helping oil companies bottom lines, these funds that we will recapture will instead be used 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, which I plan to reintroduce soon, to end gas price gouging.

Last year over 120 Members cosponsored my legislation to create a Federal law against price gouging for gasoline, natural gas, and other fuel.

I look forward to continuing to work towards greater oversight of the oil and gas trading, especially off-market trades known as "over the counter" trades.

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

The Federal Government has a responsibility to protect consumers from high gas prices. I look forward to being able to address high energy prices, to provide our constituents with the protection they need and so desperately deserve.

Mr. Speaker, if I may, I would like to enter into the RECORD a one-page article from National Public Radio about how "in other words, in the run-up to the election, oil companies cut gasoline prices 500 percent more than their raw material costs fell. And it wasn't because refining and distribution costs rose. They were relatively stable. Oil companies simply took less profit from their refineries for a short period of time."

GAS-PRICE CONSPIRACY? YOU BET!

Commentator and consumer advocate Jamie Court says there IS evidence that oil companies intentionally influence gas-price fluctuations.

TEXT OF COMMENTARY

KAI RYSSDAL: The 110th Congress will be sworn in on Thursday. Speaker-to-be Nancy Pelosi has promised a whirlwind first 100 hours of the session. On the Democrats' list of things to do is cut subsidies to the oil industry. Perhaps as a result, the American Petroleum Institute—that's big oil's main lobbying group—is launching a public relations offensive. Complete with Congressional oil patch tours, and contributions to friendly think tanks. It's trying to convince people rising energy prices are simply the result of higher demand and shrinking supply.

Commentator and consumer advocate Jamie Court says that campaign is too slick by half.

JAMIE COURT: Say you're an oil executive and you want to keep the Republicans in control of Congress. What can you do prior to an election? Well, you can keep your refineries running at full speed, flood the mar-

ket with extra fuel, and take less per gallon in profit than usual. And guess what: Department of Energy data suggest that's exactly what the oil companies did this fall. By the second week in October, gasoline prices fell 70 cents from summer's record highs. Refineries were running full throttle and America's gasoline inventories were up nearly 7 percent from the three previous Octobers. The rise in supply came despite BP's major pipeline disruption in Alaska. Ordinarily, that's an industry excuse to shrink supplies and raise prices. Now, the oil industry claimed pump prices fell because crude oil prices dropped. But gas prices dropped far more steeply than crude oil. Crude oil comes in barrels. There are 42 gallons in a barrel and the price of each gallon was down 10 cents this October over last. But gas prices fell 61 cents a gallon over the same time last year.

In other words, in the run-up to the election, oil companies cut gasoline prices 500 percent more than their raw material cost fell. And it wasn't because refining and distribution costs rose. They're relatively stable. Oil companies simply took less profit from their refineries for a short period of time. Could it have been to influence a political outcome? Well, right after election day, the price of gas suddenly rose after two months of sharp decline. Post-election, refineries have slowed down, inventories are shrinking, and gas prices are climbing. It's back to business as usual, unless the new Congress starts to do business differently.

RECOGNIZING APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY MOUNTAINEERS AND WAKE FOREST DEMON DEACONS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary efforts of the Appalachian State Mountaineers football team, who recently defeated the Massachusetts Minutemen in a 28-17 victory. What makes this a magnificent triumph is that this is the second straight year the Mountaineers have brought home the NCAA Division 1 football championship subdivision, formerly recognized as Division 1-AA. The Mountaineers finished their season with a 14-1 record, losing only their first game of the season and going undefeated all the way through to the championship game after that.

I am honored to represent Appalachian State University, as they have not only a stellar academic program but also have succeeded in athletics as well. This shows the diversity and accomplishments of Appalachian State as they exemplify a true student body where life lessons are learned through extracurricular activities as well as rigorous academic study.

I am pleased to recognize the momentous accomplishments of junior Kevin Richardson who scored all four touchdowns and had 179 rushing yards that led the Mountaineers to victory in the championship game. Although Massachusetts had started the game with an early lead, the Mountaineers persevered, worked as a team, and never gave up.

The Mountaineers had tremendous support from their fellow classmates, alumni and residents of Boone, North Carolina. Not only have they received this support on their home field, Kidd Brewer Stadium, the gridiron, but also when the Mountaineers traveled for their games. At the playoff game, an enormous crowd of 22,808 included over 15,000 Appalachian State Black and Gold dressed fans at Finley Stadium in Chattanooga, Tennessee. With great anticipation of another Mountaineer victory, the attendance set a record for Finley Stadium at the University of Tennessee where the game was played. While the game was played and won by the Appalachian State football team, the tremendous support of friends, family, alumni and North Carolina residents set an exciting tone and surely assisted the team by showing their dedicated support. Also notable was that this was the 12th time in the 15 games this season that the Mountaineers played before a sold out crowd.

I extend my deepest congratulations to all the Mountaineers who played with dedication, perseverance and, most of all, heart. I also applaud the tremendous coaching staff, including head coach Jerry Moore, who has been with Appalachian State University for 18 years, serving the athletic program with enthusiasm and steadfast commitment. His service, along with the entire coaching staff, has been invaluable in guiding the team to their great successes.

Congratulations, again, Appalachian State Mountaineers for your tremendous success in back to back NCAA titles. You are definitely a source of pride for western North Carolina.

It is also my pleasure to commend the Wake Forest Demon Deacon football team on an outstanding season. Prior to the start of the season, the Deacons were predicted to finish last in their division of the Atlantic Coast Conference. However, they were not discouraged by these predictions and actually seemed to revel in the role of the underdog. Ultimately, Wake Forest shocked the Nation by finishing the regular season 11-2, which placed them at the top of the Atlantic Division in the ACC. They then defeated the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets in the Atlantic Coast Conference Champion game, making Wake Forest ACC champions for the first time since 1970.

Much of the team's success this year is due to its resilience, tenacity, and impeccable coaching. Wake Forest coach Jim Grobe was unanimously named ACC Coach of the Year and beat out a strong group of national contenders to be named the 2006 NCAA National Coach of the Year. Coach Grobe and the Deacons battled injuries to several key players, including their starting quarterback and starting tailback, but bounced back in the face of adversity to set a school record for victories.

After such an unbelievable season, no one was surprised when the Deacons