

build upon our economic stimulus package by passing an energy bill that is designed to lower prices at the gas pump, which are currently over \$3 a gallon. The price of oil is hovering around \$100 a barrel and many predict that if we don't act now, it's going much higher.

The Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act extends and expands tax incentives for renewable energies including renewable electricity and fuel, hybrid cars and energy-efficient homes and appliances.

By investing in renewable energy, we can take another critical step in reducing our Nation's dependence on foreign oil. And at a time when our economy is struggling to produce new high-paying jobs, this legislation will help create hundreds of thousands of new green jobs in renewable energy that will help us provide a cleaner environment for the next generation.

Mr. Speaker, our legislation is also fully paid for by repealing \$18 billion in tax subsidies that big oil companies continue to receive despite record earnings. It's time Congress modernizes our Nation's energy policy by passing this important bill regardless of President Bush's opposition.

CUBAN PEOPLE DESERVE FREEDOM

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Fidel Castro has stepped down as President and dictator of Cuba and handed over his communist rule to his brother Raul. The news of Castro's resignation was met with cautious optimism by many who see this as an opportunity for the Cuban people to build a new and free society. However, it appears that for now the Castro family elite will continue to reign in a communist state and stifle the voices of reform.

Today, political prisoners remain housed in inhumane conditions. The current Cuban legal system that authorizes the arrest of people for the crime of pre-criminal activity must be drastically reformed. The Cuban people deserve to live in a democratic society based on the rule of law that recognizes the rights of its citizens to the freedoms of speech, religion, and association.

I am inspired by the phenomenally successful and patriotic Cuban American business leaders in the community I represent, such as Louis and Nena Gonda, who have always kept alive the ideals of a free Cuba to provide opportunity for the people of Cuba.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

WISCONSIN NEEDS FEDERAL HELP WITH SNOWFALL EMERGENCY

(Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, as I speak, more snow is blanketing Milwaukee and southern Wisconsin, the latest in an unending series of snowfall that has overwhelmed municipalities in Wisconsin this winter. By mid-February, Milwaukee had received over 75 inches of snow compared to 33 inches at this time last year. Madison, our State capital, has already broken its record for the snowiest winter.

A few weeks ago, one storm dumped at least a foot of snow in southern Wisconsin, including 17 inches in downtown Milwaukee. Just outside of Madison, some 2,000 cars were stranded on a highway for up to 12 hours. Last week, Wisconsin's Governor, Jim Doyle, requested Federal assistance to help Wisconsin deal with snow removal and other emergency costs.

Yesterday, the entire Wisconsin delegation sent a letter urging the President to approve this request. Mr. Speaker, Wisconsinites are proud of our ability to handle snow; but in this case, Federal help is sorely needed and should be swiftly approved and provided.

PASS THE SENATE INTELLIGENCE BILL

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Democratic majority's decision to ignore the requests of our intelligence community has endangered our national security. Why do House Democrats refuse to give the intelligence community the tools they need to protect American lives?

A strong bipartisan bill passed the Senate by a vote of 68-29. The bill also was supported by the administration, the intelligence community, as well as the majority of Members of the House. Yet the Democrats' leaders refused to bring the bill up for a vote.

Congress has no greater responsibility than to ensure that our intelligence-gathering laws are strong and our Nation is safe from future attacks. Let's hope, for the sake of our country, the Democratic leaders will decide before it's too late to pass the bipartisan Senate bill.

HONORING ESSIE MAE REED DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. CASTOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, here on Black History Month, I'm very pleased to salute Essie Mae Reed from Tampa, Florida, a true community hero. Essie Mae Reed has been an outspoken voice for the poor and struggling families in Tampa for decades. As a resident of the Central Park Village housing project in

1967, she created the first tenants association and ultimately advocated on behalf of thousands of families in Tampa.

Essie Mae Reed established the Boys and Girls Club. She ensured children could go to the community college for enrichment programs. She publicized unsanitary conditions. She ensured children will receive lunch in schools. She fought to have hot water heaters installed in public housing. She forced a change in public housing policy that barred single mothers from public housing.

Essie Mae Reed was the first African American woman to run for the Tampa City Council; and when they charged her a substantial qualifying fee, she challenged it, and the Federal district court threw it out and ruled it unconstitutional.

Essie Mae Reed is a Tampa and American treasure. She stood up for so many that didn't have a voice and improved lives throughout our community.

DEPUTY CRAIG MILLER—ANOTHER CASUALTY OF A WEAK U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the people of Houston, Texas, are in mourning today because they have lost another brave protector of our community. While working undercover surveillance on February 21, Harris County sheriff deputy Craig Miller was killed when an 18-wheeler darted onto I-10 in Houston and recklessly drove across three lanes of the freeway crashing into Miller's SUV. Miller's vehicle became airborne, and he was fatally injured in the crash.

Narcotics Officer Miller was 43 years of age, married to Michelle and has two young children. Friends described him as a comedian that could have been a regular on Saturday Night Live. Deputy Miller grew up in Houston and attended Stratford High School. He enjoyed protecting and serving the people of the Houston area.

So as peace officers wear the black band of sacrifice across their badges in honor of Deputy Craig Miller, we remember that lawmen are all that separate civilization from the uncivilized.

The driver of the 18-wheeler was charged with negligent homicide. He is a foreign national and his legal status is undetermined. Deputy Miller is yet another recent death in a series of Houston area lawmen that have been killed by foreign nationals. Deputy Miller is a casualty of a weak, chaotic, and inconsistent and overbroad immigration policy this country has.

And that's just the way it is.

FISA IS STILL IN FULL EFFECT

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, the President and his followers are telling the American public that the fight about the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, known as FISA, is endangering America; but the reality is that FISA is still fully in effect and administration officials have acknowledged that.

What this fight is really about is the President wants to give telecom companies retroactive immunity for turning over private information about Americans to the executive branch without a court order. Now, some companies refuse to go along, so obviously there could be a problem here. We should not and cannot give immunity until we know what we are giving immunity for. This is like a defendant coming into court saying to a judge, I may or may not have done something wrong. I don't want to tell you about it, but I want you to say that I am not liable, and then the judge agrees.

We would not accept that for an individual, and we must not accept it for corporations or for the government either. As John Adams said, we are a government of laws, not men, and we must honor the Constitution.

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ENERGY TAX HIKE MEANS HIGHER GAS PRICES

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, this week the House will, for the third time, debate an energy bill which actually raises gas prices for the American people, sends manufacturing jobs overseas, and increases our reliance on foreign energy. This energy tax hike will raise taxes on domestic energy producers, in essence making it more difficult and expensive to produce American energy for American consumers.

As you know, oil has reached and broken the previously untouched benchmark of \$100 a barrel, and the average national price of gasoline has gone up 16 cents in just 13 days. In my State of Nebraska, gas prices are hitting \$3.14 in Grand Island, and in Scottsbluff they're hitting \$3.08.

The American public is deeply worried about the rising cost of energy, yet we stand on the verge of making it worse by stubbornly going forward with this legislation. It's simple, really; raising taxes on American energy leads to higher gas prices and a greater dependency on foreign sources of energy.

POLITICS OF FEAR IS BACK

(Mr. WALZ of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, after a brief reprieve, the politics of

fear is back in full force. The White House and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are saying that the expiration of the Protect America Act has made this Nation more vulnerable. That is simply false. The Washington Post did a nice job of refuting this claim in saying Mr. Bush's pass-it-now-or-the-terrorists-will-win rhetoric is overheated fearmongering.

Before the Presidents Day recess, I encouraged my colleagues to stay in Washington and forge a bipartisan long-term solution. I regret that we didn't do that, but I'm not afraid of the expiration of the Protect America Act. I voted for that piece of legislation.

As a 24-year veteran of the Army National Guard, I know the importance of having the tools to fight the terrorists. However, I'm committed to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to find a long-term bipartisan solution that strengthens national security, protects our civil liberties, and does so without providing blanket immunity to companies that may have broken our laws.

I hope that we can end the fearmongering and the political rhetoric that have characterized this debate and get down to America's business. And I think it needs to be pointed very clearly to this Nation's enemies, this Nation is protected, this Nation stands united on the issue of protecting us, and no amount of rhetoric will change that.

ENERGY

(Ms. FALLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FALLIN. Mr. Speaker, the energy problems facing our Nation are obvious: Our economy suffers from out-of-control gasoline prices while national security remains at risk from an overreliance on foreign oil. Immediately increasing the amount of energy produced on U.S. soil is the first step to addressing both of these issues.

Rather than pursue a commonsense solution, the House Democrats are once again proposing billions of dollars in punitive tax increases on American oil companies. Heavily taxing oil and gas will discourage exploration and production, and that is exactly what we don't need to do. It will drive up the cost at pumps for consumers and further reduce the incentives for domestic production of oil and gas.

This week marks the third time this year that House Democrats have tried to enact an energy policy that would hurt American families and businesses, increase our reliance on foreign energy sources, and put the long-term energy needs of the United States at risk.

FISA

(Mr. ARCURI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, as a recipient of the nastiest attack ad in the last election cycle, I was sad to see this past weekend that it's already started. Yes, the Swift Boat crews were out and at it again, this time trying to convince the American people that because some Members of Congress felt it was better for our security to extend the FISA bill for 21 days rather than let it expire, that somehow they don't care about America's security. Well, that's not only untrue, it's downright insulting.

And the rationale: We should just trust the President's judgment on this matter and rubber-stamp his decisions. This is the same President who assured us that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Well, I want the cowards who crafted these intentionally deceiving messages to know that I was not sent to Congress to be a rubber stamp for this President or anyone else. I will continue to voice my opposition to the President whenever it is necessary to ensure the rights guaranteed under the Constitution are protected.

QUIT HIDING BEHIND BLAMING GEORGE BUSH

(Mr. SESSIONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, my good friends on the other side of the aisle are hiding behind a cloak that I believe is unfair. They're blaming the President of the United States for protecting this country. They're blaming the President of the United States for something that he is doing to protect this country to make sure that we have the flexibility to make sure that we can listen to enemies who are trying to do us harm. The President, as well as intelligence officials, have fought for the last 3 years to make sure that we can hear those things that were intercepts on the battlefield and turn them around to protect our troops.

Make no mistake about it, my good friends the Democrats today are here on the floor of the House of Representatives saying that they don't want to be a rubber stamp for protecting this country. I want to be a person that says that every single person should understand that today the lawful use of the ability to be effective and efficient in protecting not only our troops but this country has been taken away. Yes, we can still listen, but it's got to go through another process, back through FISA, that takes a month's worth of work through a bunch of judges that help protect this country. We need to get this done. Quit hiding behind some bit of blaming George Bush.

FISA: PRESIDENT AND REPUBLICANS PLAY POLITICS WITH NATIONAL SECURITY

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)