

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1840

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 5719, TAXPAYER ASSISTANCE AND SIMPLIFICATION ACT OF 2008

Mr. McNULTY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk be authorized to make technical corrections in the engrossment of H.R. 5719, to include corrections in spelling, punctuation, section numbering and cross-referencing, and the insertion of appropriate headings.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

HONORING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL CRITTENTON FOUNDATION

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

Mr. WATT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize an historic anniversary of the National Crittenton Foundation, which was the first charitable organization created under a congressional charter, and is celebrating 125 years of service.

People who recognize the Crittenton name often recall only the maternity homes that were usually hidden and welcomed girls and young women seeking support during their unplanned pregnancies. Much less is known about the influence of the national network of affiliated Crittenton agencies and their lasting impact on the social work profession.

The unique relationship between the National Crittenton Foundation and the Crittenton family of agencies is based on the belief that addressing compelling social issues in the United States is best done through a network of independent local agencies supported by a national body.

There are now over 23 Crittenton agencies across the country. Together they have provided over 2,200 years of continuous service to 5 million vulnerable girls, young women and their families.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in wishing the National Crittenton Foundation and its family of agencies across the country happy anniversary, and our best wishes for another 125 years of success.

□ 1845

TAX DAY

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

Mr. McCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, once again, the tax man cometh. Today, April 15, is a day American taxpayers scramble to comply with a tax code over 67,000 pages long.

In 2007, individual taxpayers spent over 3 billion hours complying with the Federal income tax laws. Individuals spent \$26.5 billion for tax software, tax repairs, postage, and other costs related to filing their Federal income taxes. And corporations spend over \$156 billion to comply with the Federal tax laws.

Americans may send \$2.5 trillion to the IRS, but the costs to our economy is much greater. Despite this, the majority party is forcing a \$654 billion tax increase on the American people, the largest tax increase in American history. It is time to scrap this oppressive tax code. It is time to take a look at the fair tax or the flat tax as viable alternatives to our overly burdensome tax code, and it's time to stop punishing taxpayers and pass fundamental tax reform.

AMERICA, WE ARE ON YOUR SIDE ON TAX DAY

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, today is Tax Day, April 15, and that's why the Democrats have risen today to be able to tell the American people we're on your side. The Taxpayer Assistance and Simplification Act of 2008 may cost \$22 million, but I can assure you that it pales in comparison to the money that my friends are spending on the unending war in Iraq.

I am glad to stand with the taxpayers of America, making sure that the elderly and the disabled are exempted from liability for employment taxes or payments to home care service providers. They deserve our respect, and today we give it to them.

I am glad that we are requiring a written notice to taxpayers of the eligibility of the earned income tax credit. It's a shame that so many think that there is so much fraud for hardworking Americans who don't file for their taxes who deserve it, and I'm delighted to stand with Americans to repeal the authority of the IRS to enter into private debt collection, those guys who have harassed the elderly, the shut-ins, hardworking Americans because they are private bounty hunters.

Today we stand with hardworking Americans. We will do so as well. And we honor our troops, declare the war's end, bring them home and reinvest in America.

LOWERING THE COST OF FUEL

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, it is, in essence, the third day in the legislative schedule when I come to the floor to talk about energy prices.

When this Democrat majority took over the House, the price of a barrel of crude oil was \$58 a barrel. Today, it hovers around \$111 a barrel.

In 2006, the Democrat leadership promised lower gas prices. What we've seen, in reality, is higher gas prices. We've seen negative change, which has caused bitterness in rural America with the high-increasing cost to travel around rural America. All we're asking is for a plan to bring on more supply.

I have been in this well numerous times in this Congress to talk about coal-to-liquid technologies. We shouldn't limit it to that. We should talk about expanding renewable fuels. We should talk about the outer continental shelf. We ought to talk about ANWR. We need to bring more supply to lower the cost of fuels because the average American citizens are tired of paying these high gas prices, and it hurts the economy of this country.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Ms. GIFFORDS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. GIFFORDS addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IRS EQUALS IRAQ REVENUE SUPPLIERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, today is April 15, Tax Day. Right now, millions of Americans are hurrying to report their incomes to the IRS. Usually, "IRS" stands for "Internal Revenue Service," but today, it might as well stand for "Iraq revenue suppliers" because so much of our tax revenue is paying for the occupation of Iraq.

Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel Prize winning economist, has calculated the occupation will cost at least \$3 trillion. That means that the occupation will cost each of our 300 million citizens \$10,000, or an incredible \$40,000 for a family of four.

America's hardworking families are struggling to keep their heads above water as we sink into a deep, what I

call, Iraq recession. Yet, they're being asked to hand over \$40,000, most of which goes to the foreign nations that are lending us the money to keep the occupation going. And that \$40,000, Madam Speaker, will get much bigger if the occupation goes on for another few years, for 100 years as some cheerleaders for the occupation are discussing.

What have we gotten for our occupation money? General Petraeus told us last week that the security situation in Iraq has gotten much better. But 19 of our incredibly brave soldiers died last week. And our top military leaders continue to warn us that our obsession with Iraq is breaking our military and that we may wake up one day to find that we can't meet a real threat to our national security.

Next month, the IRS will mail out economic stimulus checks. I'm glad that that relief is on the way. But the best economic stimulus plan would be to end the occupation of Iraq. The American people agree. A recent New York Times/CBS poll found that 89 percent of the American people believe that the cost of the occupation has contributed to our economic problems.

Last month, the Progressive Caucus put forth an alternative budget that showed that we can actually achieve an end to the occupation in Iraq and reorder our spending priorities. The budget is truly remarkable. We were able to fully fund the education that our children deserved and that our Nation must have to remain competitive in the global economy.

We were able to invest in green jobs that could employ millions of our citizens and put our Nation on the path to the energy independence we must have to fuel our economy and ensure our national security. And we were able to provide health care coverage to every American who lacks it, not only fulfilling our promise to care for each other, but making our country stronger and more competitive in the process.

But instead of revving up these engines of economic growth and social justice, the administration will soon send to Congress yet another request for emergency Iraq funding. This time around, the request will be for \$108 billion.

Madam Speaker, I agree that we must spend money on Iraq but not the way the administration wants to spend it. It wants an open-ended occupation. Instead, we must fully fund the safe, responsible redeployment of our troops and military contractors out of Iraq.

And we must help, not do it all, but we must help to reconstruct Iraq. We've all heard of the so-called Pottery Barn rule: If you break it, you own it. We need to expand that saying: If you break it, you have a moral obligation to help rebuild it.

It's time for the madness to end, Madam Speaker. It's time to bring our troops home, get our fiscal house in order, give the Iraqi people back their sovereignty and help them rebuild their country and their lives.

AMERICA'S DOMESTIC OIL SUPPLY CANNOT MEET ITS DEMAND

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the price of gasoline goes up every day, and Congress is partially to blame. The price of crude oil is increasing because demand is increasing. Our domestic energy supply cannot meet that demand. The global demand for oil is also rising with the industrialization of China. And increased demand for oil leads to increased prices for many products, including products made out of plastic.

The problem is that Congress has made it difficult for our supply to meet that demand. There is a solution to the problem. The solution is to increase our supply by exploring domestic energy sources and drilling in ANWR.

Like it or not, crude oil is still the energy base of our Nation. Unlike every other country on the planet, the United States does not take advantage of its own natural resources. When Congress abolished tax credits for domestic exploration and production, Congress effectively abolished reasonable oil prices and then raised taxes on oil companies to \$18 billion, taxes that are eventually passed on to us, the consumer. Thus, higher prices at the pump.

And this Congress decided to even award Venezuelan Dictator Chavez and his nationalized oil company with a large tax break, a tax break they did not give to American oil companies.

It's common knowledge that, if you tax something, you're going to get less of it. If you tax oil, you get less of it. Less of what? Less production and less crude oil. Less oil on the market equals higher prices at the pump. And if we look at the world crude oil reserves, 80 percent of the world crude oil is controlled by foreign nationalized oil companies. We call them OPEC. Six percent is controlled by Russian companies, and only six percent of the world oil reserves is controlled by American-owned oil companies. You know, those American-owned oil companies that are capitalistic, that have stockholders, we call them Americans. And those companies are making about 8 percent, 8½ profit.

So the world is controlled by OPEC, not American oil companies. We may be the world power, but the United States does not control the world oil market.

The only control we have is over our domestic energy supply, which we don't take advantage of because of the U.S. restrictions on offshore drilling and exploration. We have succumbed to the environmental fear myth that we cannot drill safely offshore. Other nations, including Britain, Norway, Holland, and Denmark, take full advantage of their natural resources and even permit offshore drilling in the North Sea, that area of the world where offshore drilling is the most dif-

ficult, and they do it without environmental damage.

□ 1900

We can increase our energy supply and reduce the price of gasoline at the pump by also allowing drilling in ANWR.

On top of the heightened demand for crude oil, there is a heightened demand for new refineries. Madam Speaker, I represent 21 percent of the Nation's refineries in southeast Texas, but we don't have any new ones. The last oil refinery was built 32 years ago. Our oil refineries have been punished by bureaucracy and unnecessary Federal regulations. Too many unnecessary Federal regulations, too many government controls, too many high taxes, the second highest corporate income tax in the world, and what happens? They leave town, they go somewhere else. We must lift these burdens and encourage refinery development. Our gasoline prices will eventually drop as soon as we build new refineries and we drill offshore and we drill in ANWR.

The high prices of gasoline have thrown the airline industry into chaos. Twenty-two percent of the Nation's jet fuel is made in my district. But one example, Madam Speaker, it costs an airline company \$44 a minute to allow a plane to idle on the runway. Thus, every plane that takes off that's been sitting there about 30 minutes costs \$1,500 in additional oil prices.

The high gas prices even affect the 170,000 independently owned gas stations in the country. They no longer make a profit on selling fuel. They hope to make one cent on every gallon, so they are thrilled if they make that penny. They make money by selling lottery tickets, donuts and beer, that's how they make their profit.

It's time for us in Congress to encourage more domestic oil production, lift the restrictions to offshore drilling, and take care of ourselves. We must stop relying on unstable, volatile regions in the world and pompous dictators who hold Americans hostage with their crude oil.

We have a problem, but we can solve it. Otherwise, we'll be parking our vehicles on the side of the road, riding bicycles to work, then blissfully wondering where all the crude oil went.

And that's just the way it is.

THE STATE OF OUR ECONOMY

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

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to address the House for a few moments.

I think it's very appropriate for us to pause for a moment here and just reflect on where we are as a Nation and as a people when it comes to our economy and our financial House. This April 15, it's Tax Day. It's important