

cash out my 401(k)—and suffer a 10 percent penalty on top of taxes and losses in the stock market. If I'm having a hard time, what are others doing without the support I have from family and friends?"

That was Kathryn French, one voice from Kentucky's Third District.

COUNTY TIMBER PAYMENTS: JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON

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

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, more than a year ago I warned this Congress in a series of speeches how its failure to reauthorize and fund county timber payments would hurt the counties of Oregon's Second Congressional District, and that even a 1-year extension in last year's emergency supplemental, while helpful, was not enough to stave off dramatic impacts.

Jackson County closed all of its libraries. Some of these libraries now have reopened, but with decreased operating hours at limited locations.

During an already difficult economic time, the County has eliminated 117 jobs in roads, parks, human services, public safety and planning. Real services have been cut.

Meanwhile, the Natural Resources and Agriculture Committees have discharged H.R. 3058, which is a 4-year reauthorization of county timber payments. But the Democratic leadership in this House has yet to schedule it for a vote. Why?

Since January 15, this bill has been eligible for a vote on the House floor. The leadership has found time to name Post Offices and roads and many other things, but not to schedule this important legislation for a vote and keep the Federal Government's commitment to timbered counties.

Today I, once again, call on the leadership to schedule a vote on H.R. 3058.

DEMOCRATS ARE WORKING TO REDUCE THE PRICE OF OIL AT THE PUMP BUT FACE RESISTANCE FROM PRESIDENT BUSH

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

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, American families and businesses are paying a heavy price for the Bush administration's failure to enact a comprehensive energy strategy. Families are now paying an all-time record high of \$3.50 for regular gasoline, and that's more than double the cost when President Bush took office in 2001.

Last year Democrats worked in a bipartisan fashion to pass the Energy Independence and Security Act, which is expected to save American families between \$700 and \$1,000 per year at the pump. But there's still much more that needs to be done.

Last month the House passed legislation that would take billions in tax-

payer subsidies to Big Oil and instead give them to renewable energy companies who are investing in the energy solutions of the future. This makes sense. After all, the big five oil companies continue to reap record profits. Why do they need handouts from this government?

Mr. Speaker, if President Bush and my friends across the aisle are serious about providing some relief to the American consumer, they should reconsider their opposition to this legislation.

LET'S TAKE ACTION ON ENERGY

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, truckers from Tennessee are visiting me this week, many of whom are operating at a net loss because of oil and gas prices. Gas prices are at historic highs. Residents of Clarksville, Tennessee are paying \$51 for a 15-gallon tank of gas. That's a difference of \$18.45 since January 2007 when Speaker PELOSI and the Democrat leadership gained control of Congress and began making promises.

They continue to wax eloquent about the future of energy. Their words sound promising, but the reality is, they're as empty as a lot of our gas tanks.

So what have they been doing? They have not encouraged domestic production, but have sought to remove exploration incentives that would promote energy independence.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are calling on this Congress for action. So let's take some action. Let's invest, explore and provide opportunities for American innovation to develop reliable, affordable energy for years to come.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION ACT

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, as the House prepares to take up H.R. 2830, the Coast Guard Authorization Act, I call attention to Coast Guard policy affecting repairs of its vessels. There is a loophole in current law that I seek to close with an amendment that will come to the floor tomorrow.

The law does not recognize Guam as a U.S. port for the purposes of repairs, overhaul and maintenance of Coast Guard vessels. My amendment would correct this loophole and would not allow the Coast Guard to seek repairs of vessels home ported in Guam at foreign shipyards.

This amendment is needed to protect vital American jobs. Outsourcing repair, overhaul and maintenance of national security vessels is a dangerous proposition. The case in point, the Coast Guard wants to take the cutter

Sequoia, home ported in Guam, and one of its newest in the fleet, to have its first major repairs done at a foreign shipyard by foreign workers. This move jeopardizes American jobs and critical ship repair capability on Guam.

It is in our national security interest to maintain a viable ship repair capability on Guam. The Coast Guard's actions are contrary to our national security. And this is even more serious because we have U.S. shipyard workers who are being laid off while the *Sequoia* leaves Guam.

DEMOCRATS' BROKEN PROMISES

(Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Well, it's been reported in the press that the Democrats have horrifically failed as the majority in Congress of getting almost anything done. You know, they made promise after promise to try to help the American people and, to no surprise really, most of those promises are now broken.

This is evident by the fact that there's been a dramatic increase in the price of oil that we all have had to suffer and go through. Some people now call that the "Pelosi Premium."

Before taking the majority, the Democrats vowed that they would address this issue and, more importantly, that they had a plan. Well, here we are 16 months into this administration of this Congress, where's the plan?

Now I was on the floor just last week. At that time the cost of oil was about \$115 a barrel. This week it's approaching \$120 a barrel. \$5 increase in just 1 week. Where is it going to be a week from now or a month from now or the summertime? I can only guess.

I can also guess as to when are the Democrats going to make the American people and their family budget a priority, as opposed to these other things we've been doing on the floor?

We really can't afford to keep on paying these skyrocketing energy prices and gas prices. If only the majority weren't so occupied with their special interest spending and earmarks, we would be able to focus on the energy problem.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1338, the Paycheck Fairness Act. The author has introduced this legislation for the last 10 years. It's time that we stand together for the fair payments act.

It is 2008, and yet our wives, daughters, sisters still face gender-based wage discrimination.

I am proud to advocate for equal pay because this is not a women's issue. This is an American issue. Discrimination on wages based on gender is unacceptable. Congress has a duty to tackle this issue.

The wage gap hurts families' ability to pay for basics like groceries, child care, health care. Today 41 percent of women are heads of households and are sole income earners. We're in a recession. People have lost their homes right now. The gap continues to be there. Gas prices continue to go up.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1338, and allow for all women to receive fair treatment and equal opportunity.

DOMESTIC ENERGY PRODUCTION

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

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, the United States is at a crucial point in terms of domestic energy production. With estimates that China and India combined will consume more energy than the United States by 2015, we must take a serious look at our domestic energy production and continue to reduce our dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

China's increasing offshore energy production to reduce its own dependence on foreign oil, growing their production an average of 15.3 percent per year with plans to make offshore production China's largest source of oil by doubling production by 2010.

The current congressional leadership opposes domestic offshore energy exploration and production, making America the only developed nation in the world to restrict access to offshore energy supplies.

China has invested \$24 billion in coal liquefaction technology, while current congressional leadership continues to exclude coal from their energy policy, even though it is the most abundant and efficient fuel source found in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on about our energy crisis, but it's time for this Congress to get serious about our domestic energy production.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of every working woman who faces pay discrimination in the workplace. Last year the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 to drastically limit women's access to seek justice for pay discrimination based on gender, requiring workers to file a pay discriminate claim within a 6-month period only, regardless of how long the pay inequity goes on.

The House has passed legislation to right this wrong, and the other body will follow this week. While a weakening economy weighs heavily on women and families across America, and when women are still only earning 77 percent of what men earn, this is not the time to curtail women's access to fair pay.

That is why this Congress must pass into law the Paycheck Fairness Act.

With the support of more than 227 cosponsors, my bill would help women confront discrimination in the workplace, give teeth to the Equal Pay Act by prohibiting employers from retaliating against employees who share salary information with their coworkers, allow women to sue for punitive damages and the recovery of back pay and create a new grant program to help strength the negotiation skills of girls and women.

I call on the House to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act because every woman deserves equal pay for equal work.

MEDICAID SAFETY NET ACT

(Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues today to support H.R. 5613, the Medicaid Safety Net Act. There's a lot of misinformation about what this bill does. Here are the facts.

When CMS put forth regulations to cut Medicaid service to save money, Mr. BARTON's and Mr. DINGELL's leadership not only prevented its cuts, but we actually saved more money than the cuts did.

We can't keep doing business in Washington the same way. Cutting services to save money the easy way, but not always the right way. We cannot cut programs for seniors on fixed incomes, for disabled children, for the medically needy.

Without this bill, North Carolina loses \$2.5 billion, Missouri \$1.4 billion, Florida \$665 million. But with this bill we provide health care and cut waste, fraud and abuse.

I encourage the President to look past the rhetoric, withdraw his veto threat and encourage my colleagues to support this bill and support families in need.

NOVEMBER IS THE ANSWER

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this morning I had a group of students from Hawkins Mill Elementary School in Memphis tour the Capitol, inner city young children. And I thought about what type of future they'll have and how Congress is affecting it.

I thought of the children's health plan that would give six million more children around this country health care, and the fact that the President vetoed their opportunity to have health care.

I thought about No Child Left Behind to help them in education. But that bill has been \$50 billion underfunded, and basically teaches teachers to teach a test and not to teach these children.

I thought about the war in Iraq and JOHN MCCAIN's thought that it's going to be a hundred-year war, and how

many of them might have to go to Iraq and maybe lose their lives and continue to suck moneys out of our economy and hinder their future with a budget that is out of balance and that they'll have to pay for.

Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned about the children at Hawkins Mill Elementary and all the other children and the future we leave them.

Mr. Speaker, November's the answer. We need to have a new Senate and a new President that think about the children and the future.

MICHIGAN STUDENTS FLEX INNOVATIVE MUSCLE

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, since the time of Thomas Edison and Henry Ford, the people from the great State of Michigan have been at the forefront of technical innovation, and that tradition continues today, this time led by the Thunder Chickens.

And you might ask, who are the Thunder Chickens? Well, they're a great group of students from the Utica Community Schools in my district who were part of a winning team at the First National Robotics Championship held this past weekend at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta.

Out of 340 competitors, the Thunder Chickens team built a robot that won a race, ran around a track, knocked plastic balls off a 6-foot overpass, picked the balls up and threw them back over an overpass. This was a robot that they designed.

The Thunder Chickens victory proves once again that the innovative spirit is in the State of Michigan. My congratulations to the mentor, the team's lead engineer, and to the entire team for a job well done. And I have no doubt that in the future we will see some of these Thunder Chickens grow up to be engineers who invent the fuel efficient vehicles of the future.

So when you think of Michigan innovators in the future, remember Henry Ford and Thomas Edison, and now think of the Thunder Chickens from Utica Community Schools.

□ 1030

REGULATING THE DISTRIBUTION OF HANDGUNS

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, there's entirely too much violence in our country perpetrated by the use of handguns. I come from a rather large city with about 3 million people, but I can tell you there were 22 shootings in Chicago over the weekend. Six individuals were actually killed because of the presence of handguns.