

manipulation authority that it was given in an energy law that we passed last year. This agreement should ensure that the U.S. petroleum market is free from price and supply manipulation.

Mr. Speaker, the Bush administration would have never acted on these two issues had it not been for the persistence of this Democratic Congress. We will continue to pressure the administration and congressional Republicans to join us in lowering gas prices.

THE TIDE IS TURNING: AMERICANS SUPPORT INCREASING OUR DOMESTIC ENERGY SUPPLY

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, gas is over \$4 a gallon and people are upset. According to a May 20 Gallup poll, 57 percent of Americans support drilling in U.S. coastal and wilderness areas that are now off-limits. The tide is turning. Americans know we can solve this problem of high gas prices.

Just this week the Sioux City Journal reported the results of what they called the "most important election in the county's history." By a solid 58-42 percent, the voters of Union County approved a zoning ordinance that will keep alive the county's chances of landing the Nation's first oil refinery in 32 years. They know we need to increase our energy supply, and that's why I introduced the Refinery Streamlined Permitting Act, H.R. 2471, a bill that would require agencies to give high priority to refinery applications that would result in greater capacity, a cleaner-burning fuel, and a reduction in refinery's pollution output.

Mr. Speaker, Americans need substantive solutions to secure our Nation's energy future. Let's join together in our efforts to open up the coasts, the wilderness areas, and drill for more oil to increase our domestic supply and bring down the price of gasoline.

REPUBLICAN LEADERS OPPOSE OUR EFFORTS TO LOWER RECORD HIGH GAS PRICES AT THE PUMP

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, the American people do continue to face record high gas prices, and this Democratic Congress has acted and will continue to act on legislation, commonsense legislation, that will reduce the price at the pump. Only now we need to get the support of President Bush and our friends on the Republican side of the aisle who seem content on pursuing the same failed policies that got us here in the first place.

Over the last couple of months, this House has passed 9 bills that would

lower gas prices. While we received a little bit of bipartisan support, the majority of our friends on the Republican side have opposed those 8 bills.

House Republicans said "no" to legislation that would enable the Justice Department to take legal action against foreign nations manipulating the price of oil. House Republicans said "no" to legislation that would give the Federal Trade Commission the authority to investigate and punish those who are artificially inflating the price of gas.

Mr. Speaker, our friends on the Republican side of the aisle need to realize that saying "no" is not an energy policy.

THE PRICE OF GASOLINE: CONGRESS MUST TAKE ACTION TO LOWER GAS PRICES

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, traveling through my district in west and middle Tennessee this past week, gasoline and the price at the pump are what everybody is talking about. Busy moms in Tennessee are now spending about \$240 to fill the minivan up every month. That's about \$100 more than it was when the Democrats took control of the gavels in both the Senate and the House.

Well, the Congress must stop talking and they must take action so that we can solve this problem.

Government has been and continues to be a roadblock when it comes to lowering gas prices. Republicans want to incentivize efficiency and innovation. We want to incentivize and promote production of American energy resources for an American solution to this problem. We want to incentivize ingenuity. We are innovators. We can solve this problem when we put our best minds to it.

And there are some concrete steps that we could and should take now, things that we have supported, like repealing and delaying the ethanol mandates; taking advantage of our natural resources, western shale, ANWR.

Mr. Speaker, families are calling out for relief. Let's take action.

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DEMOCRATS TAKE ACTION ON RECORD HIGH GAS PRICES AT THE PUMP

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, as the price of gasoline continues to hit record prices almost every week, congressional Democrats continue to pass legislation to help us reduce our dependence on foreign oil and lower prices at the pump. Unfortunately, the only solution President Bush and congressional Republicans come up with is

more drilling. They ignore the fact that drilling in the U.S. has recently exploded. Since 2000, the number of wells that have been drilled in this country has increased by about 66 percent, while the price at the pump for the consumer has more than doubled.

President Bush and congressional Republicans also continue to push drilling in the Arctic Refuge. Again, they ignore experts who say that opening the refuge for drilling would produce only about 6-months' worth of oil and it wouldn't be available for another 10 years. How is that a strategy for lower prices today?

Mr. Speaker, House Democrats know that American families are feeling squeezed every time they head to the gas station. That is why we continue to pass legislation that should help ease the pain at the pump. It would be nice if the President would support these efforts.

BAD POLICY HAS BANNED DRILLING OFFSHORE

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

Ms. FALLIN. If I told you that a loaf of bread was \$4, and there was plenty of wheat growing right here, but you said I could not harvest it, then I would be right to call you illogical. If I told you that you could bake more bread with a new oven, except that your rules say we can't build it, then I'd be right to say that your rules are hurting consumers. If I told you I needed to keep my bakery profits to expand my production, and you tax them away to "punish" me for market forces beyond my control, then you would be the one to blame for the rising bread prices.

Sounds silly, doesn't it? Unfortunately, this pretty much sums up our current energy policies. Just substitute gas for bread.

Bad policy has banned drilling offshore in Alaska where there are huge oil reserves. Bad policy has curtailed refinery construction. Bad policy taxes productivity, reduces the capital needed for new production, and the same basic rules of economics apply to bread and energy. When bad policies block production, you have shortages, and prices go up and people get hurt.

PASS THE NEW GI BILL

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, how we treat those who serve this country abroad in our Armed Forces says a lot about this Nation. The greatest gift that we can give to those men and women who are returning to the United States from Iraq and Afghanistan and the fields of battle is an education with the passage of the new GI Bill. When I went to Iraq last year, the troops said this version of the

same thing to myself and the five others that traveled there. They said, Don't forget about us when we come back home.

With the passage of the new GI Bill, we can make good on that promise that we all made to those troops on our visits there. I hope that Senator McCain and many of our friends here in this hall who have not supported this new GI Bill, who have not supported extending benefits to the troops as they return, to give them an education for a lifetime, will remember that you can't just go there and tell them that you support them, you have to come to this floor and to the floor down the hall and do it.

NEW EMPLOYEE VERIFICATION ACT

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this year I introduced the New Employee Verification Act, H.R. 5515, that prevents unauthorized employment. It will replace the expiring pilot program, E-Verify, that is run by the Department of Homeland Security.

The Department of Homeland Security has no business keeping tabs on work records of law-abiding American citizens. I strongly reject the Orwellian premise that a government agency tasked with catching terrorists should also maintain a huge database on the work history of every single American. Our bipartisan bill ensures that U.S. citizens go through Social Security to confirm their legal right to work, and noncitizens go through the Department of Homeland Security.

I urge you to cosponsor H.R. 5515, to create a new work authorization system that will help reduce illegal immigration, preserve the rights and privacy of law-abiding citizens, and protect Social Security.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO WORK TO PASS LEGISLATION THAT WILL MAKE REAL DIFFERENCE

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, over the last month this Democratic Congress has passed important legislation that will help our economy, our veterans, and millions of middle class families. But our efforts are being opposed by a Bush White House that refuses to work with us to solve our Nation's most pressing problems.

We can't turn around our economy without addressing the escalating housing crisis. Last month, we passed a comprehensive package that addresses the crisis directly, helps stabilize the housing market, and makes a real difference for families at risk for losing their homes.

To help jump-start our economy and help reduce prices at the gas pump, we passed legislation that extends vital tax relief to millions of families, strengthens investment opportunities for American businesses, and encourages the production and use of renewable energy. To help veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we passed a new GI Bill that restores promised 4-year scholarships so they can go to college after they complete their military service.

Mr. Speaker, we are passing legislation here in the House that can make a real difference for all Americans.

PROTECT AMERICA TODAY

(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, it has been 109 days since the Protect America Act expired and our intelligence community's ability to track our enemies was degraded. Foreign surveillance is an important part of our Nation's defense in the global war on terrorism. We need to make sure it's up-to-date and equipped with tools our military and intelligence community say are vital to doing the job.

When the Protect America Act expired, a bipartisan group of Senators passed a bill that enjoys vocal support from House Republicans and Democrats, 25 State attorneys general, including South Carolina's own Henry McMaster, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Unfortunately, none of that seems to matter to the majority leadership, who has tried to downplay the importance of this bill and has failed to bring it to the House floor for consideration. We must not tie the hands of our intelligence services while they are doing all they can to protect American families.

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

PROUD TO BE A DEMOCRAT

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

Mr. COHEN. This past week has seen the end of the Democratic primary. I think it will end on Saturday. Mr. Speaker, I have been proud to be a Democrat and witness this historic election. When our country was founded, African Americans were slaves, and even after slavery ended in 1865, Jim Crow laws and others passed by this Congress and States didn't allow African Americans full privileges until about the 1960s. Women weren't allowed to vote in this country until an amendment was passed in 1920, passed by my State of Tennessee, the final State, the Perfect 36.

To see a great candidate who happens to be an African American and a great

candidate who's a woman wage a tremendous campaign for the Democratic nomination shows how far this country has come toward truly forming a more perfect union. I am more proud than ever to be a Democrat, to be a Member of this House of Representatives.

As I look back on the anniversary of the assassination of Senator Robert Kennedy, I know that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans and we will see it move to victory in November, and a new generation of thought.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE WORK OF CHIEF DEPUTY U.S. MARSHAL MICHAEL BLEVINS

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. I rise in recognition of the success and achievements in the career of Chief Deputy U.S. Marshal Mike Blevins. Mike has served the U.S. Marshal Service since 1979. His duties have taken him all across the country, with long terms in Arkansas and Texas. Since 1989, he has been the Chief Deputy of the Western District of Arkansas. During that time, he also served as the Acting Marshal for more than 2 years.

Since he has been in Arkansas, he has helped supervise numerous programs that have resulted in a record number of fugitive arrests. His hard work has earned him several awards, including the United States Marshal Service Distinguished Service Award in 2006.

I have had the privilege to work with Mike on many different projects; most recently, a successful effort to make Fort Smith, Arkansas, the home of the National U.S. Marshals Museum.

His dedication, persistence, and leadership are all admirable qualities. I appreciate his friendship and example. I am honored to have had the opportunity to have worked with such a great man, and thank him for his service to our country.

DEMOCRATS TAKE ACTION ON RECORD HIGH GAS PRICES AT THE PUMP

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, from day one, this Democratic Congress has been fighting to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, bring down record gas prices, and launch a cleaner and smarter energy program. We have passed legislation to suspend the filling of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve later this month through the end of this year. After initially opposing this legislation, the President signed it into law last month.

We passed legislation that gives the U.S. the authority to prosecute anti-competitive conduct committed by the