

international cartels, like OPEC, that restricts supply and drives up prices. The House also passed the Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act of 2008, which allows us to retain and create hundreds of thousands of new "green" energy jobs and invest in the renewable energies of the future.

Today, experts estimate biofuel blends are keeping gas prices about 15 percent lower than they would otherwise be right now. With gas prices continuing to skyrocket in my home State of New Jersey and across the Nation, House Democrats will continue to explore ways to provide relief to consumers at the gas pump.

SUE MOTHER NATURE?

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, there are alarming events that keep occurring regarding crude oil spills that seem to go unnoticed by the environmentalists and the media. Off the gulf coast, and even off the sacred west coast of California, crude oil spills have become so noticeable that scientists can see the sources from satellites. Can you believe it? The culprit should be sued and brought to court because that is what the environmentalists do to save us from the nasty crude oil. The offender is Mother Nature.

You see, Mr. Speaker, thousands of metric tons a year of crude oil naturally seep to the surface in the Gulf of Mexico and off the west coast. Mother Nature is the cause of most offshore crude oil spills, and this must be stopped. Why don't we just remove all that crude oil that is seeping from beneath the ocean? That will eliminate oil from coming to the surface. The way to do that is to drill offshore, take out all that oil from underneath the ocean, and stop Mother Nature from polluting.

Congress needs to remove the silly offshore drilling restrictions to give us more supply. That will help bring down the price of gasoline, stop pollution, and we can teach Mother Nature a lesson or two.

And that's just the way it is.

CONGRATULATING THE STANLEY CUP CHAMPION DETROIT RED WINGS

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

Ms. KILPATRICK. I rise today to congratulate the Detroit Hockey Red Wings. The Detroit Red Wings, the 2008 National Hockey League champions for the Stanley Cup. We are most proud of you. To the coaches, the players, the Ilitch family, thank you for a wonderful, exciting season.

The Detroit Red Wings, the Stanley Cup champions for 2008. You have brought joy and cheer and adventure to all of us. Good luck to you. Enjoy your

time off. And have another wonderful season as we march to the 2009 Stanley Cup.

Congratulations, Red Wings.

UNLOCK AMERICA'S ENERGY RESOURCES

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

Mr. STEARNS. A new Gallup Poll shows that 57 percent of Americans agree with House Republicans and favor more energy exploration in the United States. America needs fewer restrictions on domestic sources of oil. The U.S. remains the only oil-producing nation that has placed a substantial amount of its energy potential off limits. This includes just 100th of 1 percent of Alaska's 20-million Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This small portion of ANWR is believed to contain 10 billion barrels of oil, or more, an amount equivalent to 15 years of imports from Saudi Arabia or 30 years of imports from Hugo Chavez. The Congressional Research Service estimates that at \$1.25 a barrel, ANWR would deliver \$192 billion in corporate income tax and royalty revenue to the Federal Government.

Even more oil is located in other restricted areas throughout the United States, and still more, Mr. Speaker, in the 85 percent of America's Outer Continental Shelf, that is currently off-limits.

We need to favor more exploration.

□ 1000

CELEBRATING NATIONAL OCEANS WEEK BY ADDRESSING THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL OCEAN POLICY

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome those from all over the United States who are here this week celebrating National Oceans Week. They are here to celebrate a week that, frankly, we have no national ocean policy about, and that is why I want to speak to you today about the need to have this Congress enact laws that will make the ocean policy like clean air and clean water policy, perhaps addressing some of those problems that other speakers have talked about today.

America's waters are managed by 140 different laws that spread across 20 different agencies. I have introduced a bill, Oceans 21, with strong bipartisan support. It is moving through Congress, and I urge my colleagues to join their constituents in helping Congress address this national policy.

A New York Times editorial last week told Congress that they must give ocean issues greater priority, in part by reorganizing the way the Fed-

eral Government deals with them. America's waters are managed by too many laws and too many different government agencies, and they recommend the adoption of our bill.

So join us in thinking about the oceans. If they are not well, neither will be the planet.

BEGGING CONGRESS TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE EVER-INCREASING COST OF GASOLINE

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

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask Congress, no, to beg Congress to do something about the ever-increasing cost of gasoline.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents are struggling every day with this ever-growing burden. Just Sunday, as my husband was filling up with gas, a young couple begged him for money so that they could get home.

This very day there is indeed drilling activity off of our country's coast. Not by our U.S. companies. That would be illegal. Instead, the Chinese are drilling off the coast of Florida with their new energy partner, Cuba. This Congress has failed to act time and time again. Our oil resources along our coastlines and in Alaska remain untapped in the name of environmentalism.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents are more than willing to do their part for the environment, but without their ability to earn a paycheck, there is little they can do, except to suffer like that young couple was on Sunday.

We have all suffered enough. Please, Mr. Speaker, let us act. Let us act wisely. Let us act prudently. Let us drill, and let us drill now.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5540, CHESAPEAKE BAY GATEWAYS AND WATERTRAILS NETWORK CONTINUING AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1233 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1233

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 5540) to amend the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 to provide for the continuing authorization of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, and any amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources; (2) the

amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules, if offered by Representative Bishop of Utah or his designee, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order (except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI), shall be considered as read, and shall be separately debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration of H.R. 5540 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). The gentleman from New York is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS). All time yielded during consideration of House Resolution 1233 is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 1233 provides a structured rule for consideration of H.R. 5540, the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network Continuing Authorization Act. The resolution provides 1 hour of debate, controlled by the Committee on Natural Resources, and makes in order all amendments submitted to the Rules Committee for consideration.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by congratulating my freshman class colleague from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) for his leadership on behalf of the Chesapeake Bay. Mr. SARBANES has worked diligently and tirelessly in a bipartisan fashion to transcend partisan politics and ensure the Chesapeake Bay remains a vibrant recreational and economic network for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, this rule and the legislation which it provides for consideration of will continue the important restoration and conservation of the Chesapeake Bay watershed by permanently authorizing the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network.

The Chesapeake Bay is our Nation's largest estuary. Many people often think of the Bay only as Maryland and Virginia, but the Bay's watershed covers 64,000 square miles in five States and the District of Columbia. In fact, the watershed's most northern part, or what we in upstate New York would call the starting point, extends into a significant portion of my congressional district and actually starts in Coopers-town, New York.

As a result of its size and location, the Chesapeake Bay has played a role in the development of American history, from early settlement and commerce to military battles and transportation development, as well as recreational uses. It truly is worthy of preservation, both for its natural beauty and the impact on our Nation's cultural evolution.

First established in 1998, the Chesapeake Bay Network is a comprehensive protection program for the Bay. The programs authorized serve to identify, conserve, restore and interpret the natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources within the watershed. These programs can also educate local communities on the significant sites in their region and how their community impacts the overall health of the Bay. The law requires the National Park Service to award grants to State and local agencies and nonprofit organizations with a full matching requirement for such projects.

The resulting network is a system of over 150 parks, museums, historic communities, scenic roadways, watertrails and water access points located within the vast Chesapeake Bay watershed. Each of these sites tells a piece of a vast Chesapeake story while providing Federal support for the preservation and improvement of these sites, to enhance both the historical and recreational experience. The network is overseen by the National Park Service, but the Park Service only manages about 10 of the network's sites. Other gateways are managed by local, State and nongovernmental organizations.

The Chesapeake Bay Network has always been a bipartisan program. The legislation that created it in 1998 passed the House on suspension by voice vote and was agreed to by unanimous consent in the Senate and signed into law by President Clinton. In 2002, a clean 5-year reauthorization received similar unanimous support in Congress and was signed into law by President Bush.

The White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation headed by the Department of the Interior has called the network a success story. The legislation this rule provides for consideration of will permanently extend the authorization for this bipartisan program. It is worth noting that the National Park Service has also recommended permanent reauthorization of the network.

I encourage all my colleagues to vote for this rule and the underlying bill and to continue to support the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend the gentleman from New York (Mr. ARCURI) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives is currently spending 1 hour debating what rules will be used to consider the underlying Chesapeake Bay Watertrails bill. This is legislation that has passed the House in prior years with little or no dissent and without controversy. So the question must be asked, Mr. Speaker, why are the Democrat leaders going through all of this trouble of having the House consider this bill under this special rule? Why is the House going to spend 2 hours today discussing a bill that could have been handled in just 20 minutes under suspension and ultimately passed by an overwhelming number of votes in this House? And why, if the House is going to such lengths and dedicating 2 hours to consider watertrails on the Chesapeake Bay, are Members being blocked from a true, meaningful debate on the issue?

This rule allows only one amendment to be offered, and that amendment would simply limit the extension of this existing Chesapeake Bay law for another 5 years, instead of extending it forever as the bill is currently written. If we are going to go through all the trouble of bringing this noncontroversial bill to the floor, why don't we have a real debate that allows every Member who has an amendment or an idea to improve this legislation to come to the House floor and have it discussed and voted on?

When the Democrat leaders took control of the Congress after the 2006 election, they promised the American people that they would run the House in a more open and honest manner. But ever since they made that promise, Democrat leaders have been doing just exactly the opposite. The CONGRESSIONAL RECORD shows that this Democrat Congress actually has the worst record, Mr. Speaker, the worst record on openness in the history of our country. In the past year-and-a-half, they have only allowed one bill, one bill, to come to the House floor and be debated under an open rule. As we see today on this Chesapeake Bay bill, they are even shutting down debate on even the most noncontroversial pieces of legislation.

Now, I might point out also that the Democrat leaders today convened the House early. Normally when you get to work early it is either because you have a lot to do or you want to go home early. Let's consider that the only two things the House is scheduled to do today is to spend 2 hours debating watertrails and the Chesapeake Bay and one hour of debate on a final budget that was supposed to have been done, Mr. Speaker, 2 months ago, and it is a budget that raises taxes by the largest amount in American history. At any rate, that is just 3 hours of time.

So why did we convene early? What are we going to do the rest of the day? It seems pretty clear that the House didn't get to work early today because they had so much to do, but rather it

is, I believe, so the House can leave early and go home.

Mr. Speaker, I have another idea, and that is that this House get serious about the rising price of gasoline in our country.

So I urge my colleagues to vote no against the previous question when they bring that up at the end of the debate to allow the House to debate "an amendment to a bill which the proponents assert if enacted would have the effect of lowering the national average price per gallon of regular unleaded gasoline."

Mr. Speaker, I first proposed this action on a similar previous question rule back on April 23. In the 44 days since, this liberal Congress has done nothing to address rising gas prices. According to information gathered by the AAA, the citizens of Washington State, my home State, who buy gas are paying the highest reported price for gasoline that has ever been paid in that State. It is at \$4.19 per gallon.

Speaker PELOSI promised the American people that Democrats had "a commonsense plan to bring down skyrocketing gas prices." Speaker PELOSI also said that the Democrats have "real solutions" that would "lower the price at the pump." Despite this promise of a plan and lower prices, since Democrats took control of the Congress, they have put forward no plan and prices have gone up, up and up to record levels.

□ 1015

And Democrats have blocked every try after try by Republicans to allow the House to debate, just simply to debate legislation to lower the price of gasoline. The only bill that Democrats have brought to the floor and passed was to file lawsuits against OPEC countries in the Middle East and to try to get them to produce more oil and to reduce prices. That is all, Mr. Speaker.

Democrats may believe that suing Middle Eastern countries and raising taxes is a plan to lower gas prices here in America, but common sense says that is just wrong. It is Republicans that have a plan to produce American made gas and energy and it is the Democrats who are standing in the way of these solutions.

Prices go up when demand goes up, and around the world the demand for oil and gas is going way up. Our country can either continue to sit here and be at the mercy of overseas Nations for our energy needs, or we as Americans can start taking matters into our own hands and start accessing the millions of barrels of known reserves right here within the United States. Our Nation's energy reserves have been put off-limits, and Democrats continue to block even exploring the possibility of producing more energy here in America.

With record gas prices at gas stations across the country, Americans can't afford to continue to rely on other countries in volatile parts of the world to sell us the gas and oil that we need. We

need to produce this energy ourselves, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am going to urge my colleagues to vote against the previous question so this House can debate the serious issue of rising gas prices confronting Americans in our country and so we can start producing, producing. Mr. Speaker, American-made gasoline.

If the House is going to spend 2 hours debating authorizing the Chesapeake Bay Watertrails law for 5 years or not, we certainly I think, Mr. Speaker, can afford to dedicate some time to considering ways to reduce the rising price of gasoline.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ARCURI. I thank my friend from Washington for his comments and just point out, Mr. Speaker, that on the one hand my colleague from Washington says that we are not allowing anyone to make any amendments, that we have closed the rule, and yet we have allowed every amendment in the Rules Committee that was offered including the one amendment from the gentleman from Utah. And then he criticizes in saying that we allow debate for 2 hours on this bill. You can't have it both ways. We have allowed debate on this bill, we have allowed for people to bring their amendments if that is what they choose to do and have an open Congress just the way we talked about.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HALL).

Mr. HALL of New York. I thank the gentleman from New York.

In the Hudson Valley, in my district, gas prices have reached crisis levels where commuting is a daily part of life and small businesses need to move their products. The record-setting spikes in gas prices have been a drain on family budgets and our entire economy.

There is, unfortunately, no silver bullet solution to our gas and oil challenge, but I am proud that Congress has taken aggressive action to provide desperately needed relief. We have passed a once in a generation increase in fuel economy standards, pushed for more development of cellulosic biofuels, and continue to advance legislation that would provide tax incentives for people to purchase fuel incentive vehicles and help us break the grip of OPEC on our economy.

The need for relief is real and urgent, and we have also taken steps to provide near-term assistance. The House has passed a bill to beef up the Department of Justice's ability to pursue antitrust action in the oil sector, and we have also passed legislation that requires the President to stop taking oil off the market to put in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, so that more supply is available on the market to lower prices. That was 70,000 barrels of oil a day that was being taken off the market that we passed in a bipartisan way. I am sure my friends across the aisle remember voting with us on that bill.

When market relief does arrive, however, we need to make sure that the in-

dividual American driver benefits, not just the oil companies. There is the old proverbial question about whether a tree falling in the woods with no one to hear it actually makes a sound. I don't know about that, but I do know a drop in oil prices that doesn't cut prices at the pump is the same as no price drop at all.

Unfortunately, that is what we have been seeing. Over the past week, the price of crude oil has actually dropped by several dollars per barrel, offering the hope that the edge would be taken off the record high gas prices we have been facing. One look at the local price figures at your gas station is enough to know it has not happened.

On April 1, the price of crude oil was just over \$100 per barrel and kept soaring, reaching \$135 per barrel during trading on May 22. Over the same period of time, the national average price of gasoline rose from just under \$3.29 to just over \$3.83 a gallon. In New York, prices increased by over 60 cents from just over \$3.40 to almost \$4.02 a gallon.

Despite the fact that as of 2 days ago crude prices had dropped below \$123 a barrel, retail gasoline prices are still at record levels. Nationwide, the average price of regular gasoline stayed at \$3.98, and in New York the average price remained at the astronomical level of \$4.17 per gallon. These represent increases of about 15 cents per gallon at the pump during the same period in which crude oil prices were declining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ARCURI. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. HALL of New York. Apparently, the old adage that what goes up must come down does not apply for the oil companies. That is a cause of great concern, and I have asked the Federal Trade Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to investigate this disconnection between the price of oil on the world market and the price of refined product at the pump.

Drivers are expected to share, in fact are forced to share, in the pain of oil and gas increases immediately, and they should have the expectation that they will also share in the relief just as quickly when the world oil price comes down. In a market this complex, it is imperative for the government to be an active protector of consumer rights and take swift measures to ensure that conditions are not exploited to the detriment of working families. By doing so, I believe we can make sure that any drop in crude prices will also mean real relief at the pump.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY).

Mr. MCHENRY. I thank my colleague from Washington State for yielding.

The question today is about the rule dealing with the Chesapeake Bay. Well, this is a piece of legislation that is not

controversial. The House can deal with this measure very quickly and move on. Instead, the Democrat leadership has chosen a very cumbersome process that locks out amendments, that locks out new ideas dealing with the Chesapeake Bay, and takes up a significant amount of time in the people's House.

What we should be spending our time on, however, in this House of Representatives is not a piece of non-controversial legislation which will take up over 2 hours of our day. Instead, we should devote this time to bringing down the cost and the price of gasoline at the pumps. That is what the American people want. That is what my constituents in Western North Carolina are demanding, that we take action on high gas prices.

We have a need and necessity for oil in this country. It is not something that I sought, but this is a life I was born into. We have had our economy powered by oil for about the last 100 years. It is just a fact. I think there will be a day when we can move to some other type of power to move our automobiles and trucks and planes. I am hopeful for that day. That day will happen and I will be fighting for policies to bring it about. But until that time comes, we must have sources of American energy, and we must be energy independent in America. We can't be beholden to the Saudi royal family for our price at the pumps; but, unfortunately, we are.

And why is that? Well, it is because of a significant number of policies that this Congress has put in place, very cumbersome regulations that we need to streamline when we come to the issue of building new refineries. And let's face it, we need new refineries to get diesel and unleaded fuel to the pumps. That also equals jobs. Unfortunately, in this country we have to import refined products. That means we have outsourced jobs. That means we have also sent our wealth overseas to these Nations that are refining product.

But beyond refineries which we must build, we also have to increase domestic production, American energy sources. And we have got significant American energy resources. The known reserves that we have in this country of oil will power 60 million automobiles for 60 years. Now, that is not a long-term solution, but it is certainly good for the next 60 years while we are building alternatives and different types of power sources.

So we also need that American energy production, whether it is oil, natural gas, coal. We have more coal in this United States, enough power source out of that coal than Saudi Arabia has. Actually, we have three times the amount of coal in this country as Saudi Arabia has oil. So these are not perfect solutions, but they will work in the short term.

But why are we at this state? Why are we at this place where we are paying almost \$4 at the pump?

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MCHENRY. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. KINGSTON. You mean to tell me that the American middle class is continuing to suffer with record high gas prices, prices that have nearly doubled since the Democrat regime took over Congress, and we are still not dealing with it today? Is that what I am hearing from the gentleman?

Mr. MCHENRY. This is what I am talking about, and I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia asking. The reason we have high gas prices is because there is inaction by Democrat leadership. They don't want new refineries. They don't want American energy production. They want to simply conserve our way into energy independence. That is not possible. The American people know it is not possible, and I ask the Democrat leadership to yield to common sense and ask us to create more American energy so we can be energy independent.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that my colleague from North Carolina talks about inaction. And he would have the American people believe that inaction means not drilling. They are two distinctly different things. Just simply because I don't advocate drilling doesn't mean that I am not for alternative energy. We cannot drill our way to energy independence. It just doesn't make sense.

Mr. MCHENRY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ARCURI. Yes, I will yield.

Mr. MCHENRY. What pieces of legislation have been brought up this Congress to increase American energy production? Name one.

Mr. ARCURI. Reclaiming my time, it is not about drilling. That is what some people in this House want to talk about. It is not. It is about developing alternative energy. In my district, we are developing cellulosic ethanol. In my district, we are developing geothermal power. We are heating schools, we are heating buildings, we are heating offices with geothermal. It is about developing alternative energy. It is not about drilling, drilling, drilling. Because in the end, what is going to happen is in 10 years or in 15 years we are going to defer this problem to our children. It is not something that we should just dump on their laps by just moving the problem to them.

We can drill today, we can drill tomorrow. And then in 10 years and in 15 years our children and our grandchildren will have to deal with this. It is time to deal with it today. Mr. Speaker, it is time to deal with it today and to deal with it now, not to defer it to our children. That is not what a good parent does.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Before I yield to the gentleman from California, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) to respond.

Mr. MCHENRY. I appreciate the gentleman from Washington yielding me time so I can answer the gentleman's question.

I think this is a very interesting argument, alternatives. Well, so far in our power resources in the United States, 1 percent of our current power is produced by the types of things the gentleman is talking about. They are very expensive currently. The technology is very expensive.

So the gentleman is saying we can take that 1 percent, and let's say we can double it in the next 10 years, which is an ambitious proposal that some on your side have advocated and actually I am for. That takes us to 2 percent of American energy production.

What we need while we are doing that is actually reasonable solutions, and that means increasing supply.

□ 1030

The American people understand basic economics, unlike some on the other side of the aisle. They understand basic economics, that it is supply and demand that control price.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I want to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN).

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I would just say to my friend from New York, I don't have any geothermal cars in my district. Perhaps the gentleman does in New York.

For me to answer the folks back home that are saying what are we going to do about gas prices with well, we're studying geothermal, frankly, it just doesn't cut it.

You know, I remember the week before we got out for Memorial break, that we had 55, 55, count them, 55 suspensions in 2 days. I can't recall all of them, but when I had a tele-town hall this last Sunday in my district, I had 4,200 people on the line, and not one of them asked a question about one of those 55 suspension bills.

What did they ask about? They asked about what are you in Congress going to do, not just about gas prices, but about increasing energy production in this country?

So I come back here this week anticipating legislation that perhaps will deal with those kinds of issues. And what do we have?

The first 2 days, we had 22 suspensions; supporting National Men's Health Week, a worthy cause, but not a single person asked me about that. But almost everybody asked me about gas prices.

We recognized the State of Minnesota's 150th anniversary, a worthy goal. But not a single person asked me about that. Not one of the 4,200 people asked me about that. But many of them asked me about gas.

We supported the goals and ideals of Arbor Day Foundation and the National Arbor Day, a nice thing to do,

but not a single person asked me about National Arbor Day. Many asked me about gasoline prices.

We designated a post office to be named after someone in Portland, Oregon. We designated another post office to be named after someone in San Gabriel, California, again a nice thing to do, but not a single person of the 4,200 that were on my tele-town hall asked me about that. But they did ask me about gas prices.

We had the Federal Food Donation Act of 2008, not a bad idea, but not a single person asked me about that. But they asked me about gas prices.

We had the Senior Executive Service Diversity Assurance Act on the floor that we talked about and passed, but no one asked me about that back home. They all asked me about gas prices.

We had the Telework Improvements Act of 2008. No one asked me about that, but they asked me about gas prices.

We voted on the Federal Agency Data Protection Act this week. Not a single person asked about that. But almost everybody asked about gas prices.

We had the Government Accountability Office Act of 2008. No one asked me about that, but they asked me about the accountability of this Congress in not doing a single thing for more energy production.

We had a bill authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby. That's like mother and apple pie. But no one asked me about the Soap Box Derby in Greater Washington. They all asked me about their cars which don't run downhill by gravity, but they do run on gasoline. And they said, what is Congress going to do about that?

We authorized the use of the Capitol Grounds for a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. Now, I'm sure that's a wonderful sorority, but not a single person of the 4,200 that were on my tele-town hall asked me about that sorority. But most of them asked about gasoline prices.

We had the James Ashley and Thomas Ashley United States Courthouse Designation Act. And I remember Tom Ashley, a good man. But nobody asked me about him on my tele-town hall. But they almost all asked about gas prices.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. I thank the gentleman for an additional minute. I would need about 4 minutes to go through all the other suspensions we got through this week, this week, that is legislative time that we have spent on this floor, those without rules.

Now we're going to have a rule on this bill, the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network Continuing

Authorization Act, probably a worthy act. But, believe me, I know it may surprise the gentleman from New York, but not a single person in my district asked me about that. But they asked about gas prices.

And perhaps the reason why the gentleman from New York is loath to talk about this is that on every single vote we have had over the last number of years on increased oil production, 91 percent of the Republicans have voted for increased American energy production, American energy production, and over 85 percent of the Democrats have voted against it.

What has resulted from that? A stalemate in which the American people are held hostage because we will not allow, yes, drilling. I know that's a dirty word over there. Drilling. That's usually how you bring oil up out of the ground.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has again expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentleman 30 seconds.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Usually you have to drill to bring the oil out of the ground because that's where it is. It may be a dirty word in the gentleman's district, but frankly, you have to drill before you refine, before you have it available so that you can increase supply so that people can have their prices go down so they can drive to work and drive to recreational facilities, not in thermoenergy, geothermal cars, but actually in cars with gasoline, which is what happens in my district. Perhaps the gentleman from New York's district is different.

Maybe we should take some attention from the concerns of the American people and do something about gas prices here.

Mr. ARCURI. I thank the gentleman for the history lesson and for the lesson on what drilling means. I really appreciate that. I know we don't have a lot of domestic oil in New York, but I appreciate having him tell me what drilling means.

But when people in my district talk to me about what are we doing about gas, and we get those very same questions, I tell them that we have done some things. We have passed the Strategic Petroleum Reserve Fill Suspension Consumer Protection Act. I tell them we've passed the Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act. I tell them we've passed the OPEC and big oil companies accountability bill. I tell them we've passed the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. I tell them we've passed the Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act. I tell them we've passed the Energy Price Gouging Prevention Act. I tell them we've passed the No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act. I tell them we've passed the Energy Market Manipulation Prevention Act.

Mr. Speaker, America is tired of the same old rhetoric. They want new solutions. When I talk about geothermal projects that we have in our district,

when I talk about cellulosic ethanol plants, when I talk about wood pellet plants, that is new strategies. Those are new philosophies. Those are the kind of strategies that we need in this country for real, long-term change in direction, the kind of direction that will make it easier for our children and our grandchildren to live and to function and not to be dependent on foreign oil.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, it's so interesting listening to this debate this morning. And I think that the gentleman was rattling off some bills that they have passed. The problem is they're all talk and no action. They don't do anything to get the price down at the pump; don't actually accomplish the goal of producing any more oil.

What the American people want to see is not right now a debate on a bill which could go through on a voice vote, the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. What they want is for us to take the time to address the price at the pump and the cost of energy.

My constituents in Tennessee ask me every week, what did you all do to address the price at the pump? They know that we, as Americans, are the greatest innovators that there are. American ingenuity can solve all sorts of problems. They know that we have the resources on American soil to address this issue. They also know that we need a short-term, a mid-range and a long-term strategy.

Now, to my colleagues, I will say no is not an energy strategy, and no is not an energy policy. No is a roadblock to a sustainable, predictable energy source.

Now, we can go in and look at what was happening with the price of a barrel of oil, and we're using about 21 million barrels of oil in America today to get the 420 million gallons of gasoline that you are pumping when you go to fill up your car.

Now, when the Democrats took the gavels in the House and in the Senate, and they're the ones that are setting the legislative agenda, they are the ones that are saying no to getting this price down, they are the ones who are making decisions that continue to drive it up. \$123.85 a barrel. That's where it was yesterday. That is where it was.

What has caused this to happen?

Mr. Speaker, I would say it is because of the history of action. When you look at ANWR exploration, House Republicans have supported this 91 percent of the time. House Democrats have opposed it 86 percent of the time.

Coal-to-liquid. There's another innovative source. 97 percent of the Republicans have supported it. 78 percent of the Democrats have opposed it.

Oil shale exploration. House Republicans have supported it 90 percent of the time. House Democrats have opposed this American solution to American resources and American energy 86 percent of the time.

The Outer Continental Shelf. We know that Cuba is letting China drill 50 miles off our shores. What are we doing with the Outer Continental Shelf? 81 percent of the time House Republicans support that. Democrats oppose that 83 percent of the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentlewoman 30 additional seconds.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words. Rhetoric is what the Democrats have given us on the issue of the price at the pump, on the issue of home heating oil.

The American people want answers and they want solutions. And what they are getting from the Democrat leadership is prices that are going up and up and up and up, in my district, from \$2.20 a gallon to \$3.99. \$3.99. That is what Democrat leadership of this body has given you.

Mr. ARCURI. I'll reserve my time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire how much time remains on both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington has 8½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 18 minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, if I could inquire of my friend from New York if he has any further speakers.

Mr. ARCURI. We have no further speakers.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and wanted to point out that yesterday we passed Soap Box Derby Appreciation Day. And I guess that's fitting because that must be the Democrat idea to conserve oil and look for alternatives, because at the rate gas prices are going, we will all be driving soap box cars that are powered by feet.

Look at the gas prices. When the Pelosi regime took over the House of Representatives, gas prices were \$2.33 a gallon. Now, they promised to reduce those prices; yet a funny thing happened on the way to the pump. It is now about \$4 a gallon. Well, I guess if that's indicative of the promises that the Democrats keep and the way they deliver it, maybe it's right that yet again today we are ignoring any serious legislation that would address gas prices.

You know, it's interesting. It's been over 10 years since President Clinton vetoed drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve. Now, I want to put this in perspective for you. Remember, Alaska is twice as big as Texas. The re-

serve area is the size of South Carolina. The potential exploration area is about 2,000 acres.

Now, a word picture would be that if the Arctic wildlife reserve was a basketball court, the proposed exploration area is a business card. And yet, the radical extremists in the liberal community are afraid to drill there.

I just got back from a bipartisan trip to the Middle East. We met with oil ministries from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. And you know what they said?

How dare you Americans come to the Middle East and demand that we reduce oil and gas prices when you won't even drill on your own lands.

□ 1045

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. KINGSTON. You have the audacity to come to us and tell us to drill more and yet you won't even unlock your own lands. What kind of hypocrisy is that? Instead, you know what the Democrats do? They make it easier to sue OPEC. Well, that sounds good, but the reality is what they told us is, Hey, the higher the cost of doing business in America is the less willing we are to do business there. And guess what? China and India are willing to buy our product as is. You increase the price of doing business in America, China and India will step in that void. Keep that in mind.

One more day the Democrats are ignoring high gas prices.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON).

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I find the testimony from the gentleman from New York interesting. He mentioned pellet stoves, one of the new future heat. 800,000 Americans now heat their homes with a pellet stove. There's 30 or 40 pellet mills sprung up around the country but with no government incentive.

Now, we ought to be incentivizing people to be able to heat their homes with woody biomass. Woody biomass has been the fastest growing energy but without government incentives. We need to be incentivizing that.

He also mentioned cellulosic ethanol, which is from woody biomass or garbage or sweetgrass. That's in the laboratory. We're all for that. But it's in the laboratory. There is no refinery producing that kind of energy today at any scale at all. In fact, we have not yet designed the first refinery. It's future.

The only thing in all of the bills he mentioned that produced energy was we stopped using 70,000 barrels a day in the Strategic Reserve, and that's when we use 21 million barrels a day for the

country, we save 70,000. That's the only production that's been passed.

As we look to my left, we have a chart that shows offshore locked up. Oil and gas out there proficient. Lots of it. Locked up. Well, if we want to clean up the Chesapeake Bay, there's a way to do that. The NEED Act, H.R. 2784, my bill does that by producing offshore, putting a part of the royalties. We have 32 billion for carbon capture, 32 billion for renewable energy, 100 billion for the treasury, 150 billion for producing States, 20 billion for the Chesapeake Bay.

Now, these are at old gas prices. This is gas. Natural gas was \$12.50 when I left my office. Last year at this time it was \$6.50. That's the gas we were putting in the ground for next winter. Americans are going to get whacked this winter because we're putting gas at almost twice the value in the ground for winter storage than we did last year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Folks, if we're serious about cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay, we can get affordable energy for America by producing offshore. Every country in the world produces here. We're the only country that doesn't, and we can have \$20 billion, which is exactly what the Chesapeake Bay people need to clean up the Chesapeake Bay, and we can have affordable natural gas and oil for America.

Folks, we need to have supply.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, this is not an either/or match. This is not either alternatives or crude oil and natural gas. This is both. The issue is how do we transition from where we are today to where we all want to get to, and how do we afford that transition.

If you simply cut off crude oil as part of that solution today, then you're going to have exactly what we've got: rising gasoline prices, soaring electricity prices, natural gas prices are going to go up, home heating costs are going to go up. And in an ironic twist of fate, the commonsense plan to lower gasoline prices includes being allowed to sue OPEC to increase their production. I'm anxiously awaiting reaction in the OPEC countries to allow OPEC citizens to sue America to force America to produce her own energy.

This is not either/or. It is both.

Let's turn down the rhetoric and begin to work toward both a current short-term solution as well as a long-term solution all of us embrace.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire of my friend

from New York if he's the last speaker still.

Mr. ARCURI. I have no further speakers.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrat leaders today have put a noncontroversial Chesapeake Bay watertrails bill on the House floor, but what is first and foremost on the minds of Americans is gas prices, as we have talked about today. And it's also a huge concern in the Chesapeake Bay communities.

I venture to guess the citizens and families living around the Chesapeake Bay don't wake up in the morning worried about watertrails but they do worry in the Chesapeake Bay and the Chesapeake basin about the price of gasoline.

I would like to submit, Mr. Speaker, for the RECORD, several news releases here talking about the price of gasoline. This is from WJZ, a local Maryland station. And it says here, "Watermen Feeling Pain At the Pump." It talks about the beautiful weather, but it also says that the price of gas is doubling and the price of seafood is going down, and that's a bad combination.

Here is another one: "Gas prices force business owners to clamp down." And there's talk about a gentleman who has to spend \$4,000 a month on gasoline.

And here is another one regarding the Chesapeake Bay community. It says, "Gas prices fuel dip in fishing."

[From WJZ—a local Maryland station, May 30, 2008]

WATERMEN FEELING PAIN AT THE PUMP (By Alex DeMetrick)

The weather is beautiful on the Chesapeake Bay. But things are downright ugly at fuel docks.

Alex DeMetrick reports gas prices are soaring and that's having an impact on those who depend upon boats and the bay to make a living.

Naming a work boat the "Last Penny" may have been a stab at humor once, but it's striking a little too close to reality at fuel docks around the bay. Diesel is at \$4.50 a gallon and climbing.

"The gas is doubling and the price of seafood is going down," said Waterman Bucky Murphy.

Working the water takes constant moving. But with crabs spotty and fuel high, watermen are trying to conserve.

"They're hurting us bad. It's almost double in the past year, so it's taking a right good bite out of us," said waterman Wendell Lednun.

Joe Spurry buys crabs on Tilghman Island, but his truck might carry them as far away as New York.

Right now, crabs are selling for around \$90 a bushel dockside. By the time they get to a seafood market in Baltimore, they could cost around \$200 a bushel.

[From the Capital, May 13, 2008]

GAS PRICES FORCE BUSINESS OWNERS TO CLAMP DOWN (By Adriane Watson)

Tom Campbell is spending \$4,000 per month on gasoline.

The gas budget for Mr. Campbell's business Short Hop Moving Inc., an Annapolis-based moving company, increased \$2,500 since the price of fuel reached an uncomfortable high. The company has since taken a financial hit because of the spike in gas prices.

"In the past year, we cut our business literally in half," he said.

Skyrocketing gas prices forced Mr. Campbell to reduce his fleet from seven moving trucks to three, and to close a satellite office in Laurel.

The small-business owner said he can no longer give his employees company credit cards to use at the pumps. Instead he fills up the trucks himself each morning to monitor what he's spending on gas, which is inching toward \$4 per gallon.

Gasoline prices have shattered previous records, reaching an average high of \$3.72 per gallon in Maryland yesterday, said Ragina Avarella of the AAA Mid-Atlantic division.

Mr. Campbell said the strain of gas prices has extended beyond his business and into his personal life, as well. His daughter now walks to visit friends, and he and his wife cut down on driving by using only one of their vehicles, he said.

"It's changing everything," he said. "It's changing the way we do business completely."

The pain at the pump isn't limited to transportation with tires. Elevated prices are causing some charter fishing captains to want to jump overboard. Alex Schlegel, owner of Hartge Yacht Yard in Galesville, said he is selling gas for about \$4.20 per gallon at his fuel dock and has noticed fewer small powerboats on the water.

Capt. Joe Richardson, of Dancer Sportfishing Charters, said he is trying to spend as little time at the pump as possible, and that means changing the way he does business. He said he isn't able to take his charters out as far into the Chesapeake Bay as he did previously as a means of conserving gas.

"You have to change your game plan; you have to raise your prices, and you're afraid to price yourself out of the game," he said.

Mr. Richardson said he noticed people calling to make price comparisons more this year than ever before.

"We might just end up sitting at the dock if the prices get too high," he said, explaining that bookings for his charter boat are already down from last year.

Capt. T.J. Johnson, owner of Tracy Lynn Charters out of Edgewater, said he has tried to stay at the same price for years. But this year, that's proven difficult as he was forced to raise rates by \$25 for this fishing season because of fuel costs.

He said he fears raising rates too much will put him out of business.

"If you go up too much, you're gonna be sitting at home every day and not doing any charters at all," he said. "It makes it tough."

To conserve gas and save money, Mr. Johnson said he has taken advantage of fishing areas closer to his Edgewater dock, but will have to double the distance he travels from 5 miles to 10 or 15 miles later in the season.

"I can't just take them out for sucker lops," he said.

Mr. Johnson said that before fuel cost went through the roof he ran between 85 and 90 charters a year. Last year, that number fell to 60 charters, and this year he said he has only taken about 10 trips out, half as many as this time last year.

Even regular clients are reducing their bookings already this season, he said.

Otis Elevator Co., a national elevator, escalator and moving walkway manufacturer, booked about 38 charter trips with Mr. Johnson last year. This year, Mr. Johnson said

the company has cut back to 25 dates from now through October.

Though he couldn't name a specific reason why the company, among other regular clients, has reduced their charter trips, Mr. Johnson said he suspects it is combination of the sluggish economy and higher transportation costs that have people spending less across-the-board.

And the lack of business has affected how he and his wife use fuel at home, he said.

Mr. Johnson, who maintains the family vehicles himself, said he tries to keep oil changes up-to-date and has begun filling his tires with more air, sacrificing a smoother ride for better gas mileage.

"I'm just gonna try to ride it out and do what I can. I ain't got much choice," he said. "I'm doing a lot of things now that I never had to do 20 years ago."

For others, it's business somewhat as usual.

Sandi Latham owns Sandi's Flower Shop on King George Street and offers delivery services to her clients. So far, she said, she has "absorbed the loss" in hopes that the cost of gas will begin to drop.

Ms. Latham has taken the hit from all sides since the cost of her trash removal and delivery from wholesalers has spiked to make up for the increases at the pump.

She hasn't increased her own delivery rates, which she said are now hovering at about \$10 for local deliveries. Ms. Latham receives her wholesale flower deliveries from companies in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., that charge from \$9 to \$12.50 to deliver flowers to the downtown florist. While she said those prices are "very reasonable" for the distance of the trip, the rate increases are becoming too much for her to absorb.

Ms. Latham said she fears raising delivery rates greater than \$10 because she feels her customers will find anything higher "frustrating." But she said most people are willing to pay for the convenience of delivery. Still, she wants to wait out the competition.

"You hate to be the first guy that raises their rate," she said. "But you also hope your customers will come to you for your product."

In the meantime, she said she is reviewing her own costs and considering mark-ups across-the-board for flower sales to make up for the steady increase in gasoline prices.

"It's bearing down on me and I've tried not to raise it, but I'm just going to not have a choice," she said.

[From the Capital, June 1, 2008]

OUTDOORS: GAS PRICES FUEL DIP IN FISHING; CHARTER OPERATIONS, BAIT SHOPS FEELING ECONOMIC PINCH

(By Bill Burton)

It's the economy, stupid.

So said Clinton aid James Carville in that future president's first and winning campaign against George H. W. Bush. It turned out he was right. Bottom line: It is the economy.

Anglers who don't daydream of skipping a charterboat or guiding once they retire are as scarce as drivers of big SUVs pleased with their fuel mileage. But, believe me, these days their pipe dreams would be nightmares. That is if they got any sleep at all. And no psychiatrist would be needed to interpret their dreams.

It's the economy, stupid.

This time around, Izaak Walton's can't blame fisheries administrators, regulations, publicity about blemished rockfish or the shortage of fish available. Repercussions from the escalating price of fuel are felt everywhere, sportsfishing is no exception. Neither is the business of chartering, headboating or commercial fishing.

The same applies to businesses associated with fishing; one big tackle shop proprietor told me the other day, "I've got four people and myself working right now—and not a single customer in the shop. Haven't seen one in 10 minutes."

On weekdays, charter fishermen tell me they've never seen so few chartercraft on the Chesapeake; even worse is the number of private boats they encounter. If they see a dozen recreational boats during a trip that's a lot. Meanwhile, the fish appear to be stagnating for a good summer season.

The black drum, a few of which were caught earlier in Tangier Sound down Crisfield way, are now moving in at the Stone Rock off Tilghman Island; some fishermen are using white perch to catch stripers via live-lining, and the Norfolk spot arrival is picking up despite the bay's chillier waters. As soon as the bay gets a few degrees warmer the perch will leave the tributaries—and at the ocean, the big bluefish, tuna and sharks are already moving in.

Sorry, the same can't be said for fishermen, recreational or charter. No matter how they fish, they all share the same woe; the cost of fuel. A gallon of diesel can cost more than \$5. A charter skipper can hike his price 25 bucks and what's he got?

He's got five more gallons of fuel, that's all he's got. And that won't take him far in a big charterboat. That's what Capt. Ed Darwin runs out of Mill Creek, Annapolis. His Becky-D purrs on gasoline, which is a bit less costly than diesel, so after considering the overall economy, he decided on only a \$25 increase—and already finds fuel costs are outpacing him.

"I raised my price \$40 and the way fuel is rising, I already lose \$20 every day," said Bruce Scheible of Scheible's Fishing Center at Ridge in St. Mary's County. "No way can I get over the hump in fuel costs—not only that we've got good fishing, but less customers. Fortunately we've got bluefish (2- to 3-pounds) in the Potomac along with rockfish and with hardheads moving in—and that can save us money. We don't have to run all the way down the Potomac to the bay then to the fishing grounds below there. We have charters, but certainly not near as many as usual."

Fred Donovan, dockmaster at the Rod 'n Reel Docks, Chesapeake Beach, played a hunch. He didn't raise prices at one of the biggest fishing centers on the bay figuring it would give him a competitive edge and it worked in the always popular trophy season when everyone wanted to go. Now the dollar figures whirl by so fast on fuel pumps, soon his regular customers who haven't already booked their dates can expect a letter informing them prices are going up \$50. He will honor lower agreed prices made in early bookings.

Fred's got a few other problems. Much of his clientele come from long distances, Pennsylvania and Virginia or further away, and it's getting so they now have to figure into expenses the driving costs to Chesapeake Bay. And, what to do about headboat prices? The big fuel thirsty headboat Lady Hooker has started headboat service out of the Rod 'n Reel with varying success (cool bay waters have slowed perch'n) and it's no longer financially feasible to sail with less than 15 customers aboard at \$55 a head plus the dozen bloodworms each angler gets with the ticket.

Some trips have already been canceled like the one on the day I called when only 11 fishermen showed. The Lady Hooker sails at 8 a.m. and returns to the docks at 3 p.m., no more night trips. Perch, spot and hardheads are the usual catches with blues and stripers other possibilities. One has to be careful about raising headboat prices; headboaters

are more cost conscious than charter fishermen. Fred advises anglers to call ahead at 800-233-2080 to inquire of the likelihood of sailing on a given weekday.

The economy isn't good, so they don't want to raise prices for fear losing customers, yet if they don't they can lose money by running. And like the rest of us, they have no idea how high fuel costs will peak. There has to be a limit, but where? Fuel prices impact every aspect of sportsfishing as they do everything else.

Others who cater to the fishermen are also in a bind. Rick Warren of Warren's Bait Box, Glen Burnie, is concerned about his business. His customers no longer shop; "they know what they want when they come in—and that's what they buy, they don't look around to shop for anything else. Rising fuel costs, whether in vehicles to get them to fishing areas, fuel for boats to fish from and higher headboats or charterboat fees have them strapped for cash, there's little to spare," said Rick.

"Higher end and more profitable tackle items like the better rods and reels aren't selling like they used to," said Charlie Ebersberger, proprietor of Anglers Sports Center just off of Route 50. "Fishermen check prices carefully, they've become more cost conscious and now look for lower-end and mid-priced merchandise to save money for fuel-associated costs. I hope it changes when the fishing gets hot—and they still just have to go regardless of cost."

Capt. Stu Burgoon Sr., who with his son Stu Jr. fish a few charterboats out of Happy Harbor in Deale, have started to fish for black drum at the Stone Rock before or after they get their rockfish have made some changes in gears to their boats to increase fuel efficiency, but the longer run for drum is still costly. Once the expected live-lining at the False Channel gets hot in a few weeks, it will be a long run out of Deale to load up on stripers.

Capt. George Prenant, past president of the Maryland Charterboat Association who skips the Stormy Petrel out of Happy Harbor, says the charter skipper who gets four or five bookings a week is quite lucky.

"Customers have become 'somewhat' timid," said George who endured the Kepone scare, Tropical Storm Agnes that muddied waters for weeks on end and other economic woes in his long career. "Trophy season was good, but now that they've (customers) have got cabin fever out of their system, who knows what lies ahead. We'll just have to wait and see."

Most who board charterboats these days can expect to pay about \$500 for a half-day trip, \$700 to \$750 for a full day—and that's at the moment. If fuel prices keep rising (lately they've been rising a few cents a day), expect to pay more. The prudent fisherman will book now at a given price and hope there are no additional surcharges for fuel as there well might be.

Meanwhile, more than a few marinas and fishing centers have vacant slips as some have decided not to use their boats this year. Some will fish selectively and charter—get a gang together—to save on bottom-line expenses. One yacht club always filled has 14 vacant slips. The expected run of bluefish aplenty could help a bit, blues spread out everywhere, which should mean shorter runs and small boats to catch fish, but 'most everyone demands rockfish. Close by perch, hardheads and spot are other alternatives.

No matter how one looks at it, fishing is going to cost much more this year—and at a time when the outlook is for great catching. Everything depends on priorities. Though dyed-in-the-wool Izaak Walton's place fishing high on their priorities, there's a limit. The vehicles they drive to work also need fuel in

their tanks. A budget can be stretched only so much—and everything costs more because to transportation charges.

If you think things are bad in the bay, how would you like to be an offshore charter skipper trying to book parties for billfish and tuna in the distant bluewater canyons. The cost of fuel alone can be \$1,000 to \$2,000 depending on size of boat and canyon targeted what with diesel prices for many charterboats already above five bucks a gallon for those obliged to buy their fuel at the docks they fish from. If you have to ask the price for a charter you can't afford to go.

Mr. Speaker, it is really time for the House to debate ideas for lowering gas prices. I'm going to ask my colleagues to defeat the previous question, and I will move to amend the rule to allow that any amendment be made in order on the underlying bill that would have the effect of lowering the national average price of gasoline.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have the text of the amendment and extraneous material inserted in the RECORD prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I urge again my colleagues to defeat the previous question so this House can get serious about rising gas prices and so we can start producing American-made energy and gasoline.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is a person in America today that hasn't been affected either personally or through their business by the high cost of energy, by the high cost of gas. You know, we all go to the gas pumps. Just last weekend when I was home, I was pumping the gas, and you could see the look on people's faces as they watched the amount and as they went inside to pay the bill. And we all know, whether you're in New York or whether you're in the State of Washington or whether you're in Texas, no matter where you are here in this country, we all know and experience the same thing.

However, the strategy of finger-pointing and blaming just will not get this country to where we need to be. We talk about here whose fault it is. We constantly have people pointing the finger. The fact of the matter is in 2002 when this President took over in the White House, the price of oil was \$25 a barrel. Today it's nearly \$130 a barrel. The cost of gas per gallon has tripled.

We could point the finger. We could blame. We could do a lot of things. The fact of the matter is we cannot drill our way to energy independence. And people here would have you think that there is no drilling and there is no exploration going on in this country. Right now in my State, in fact, in my district, in the southern part of New York State, the northern part of Pennsylvania, there are huge amounts of exploration going on for natural gas.

Huge natural gas fields there. They are looking for gas. They are searching for gas. They are finding it in this country. It is going on. The American people will have all of the energy that they need.

However, if we are going to get to where we need to be as a country, we cannot depend on a finite resource. We can't depend on gas and oil. It will be gone. It will eventually deplete, and our children will be right where we are now paying double, triple, quadruple what we are paying now for energy.

It is time to look toward alternative energy, and that's what we advocate; Not stopping drilling. No one wants to see us stop drilling or stop exploration. Just to be practical in terms of how we develop our alternative energy in the next step that we take.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to bring us back here to the discussion, just for a moment, of the real reason that we're here today, and that is the reauthorization of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. I think it's sad that this bill seems to have been trivialized today because this is a very important bill. This means a great deal to many people that live in the States that the Chesapeake Bay watershed is in but more importantly to this country.

It is such an important part of our history and a critical part of our future. This is a program that did not have even a single Member of Congress oppose its creation or its subsequent reauthorization. Over a decade that the program has existed, it has been heralded as a success by the administration and Congress alike.

The program was unanimously reauthorized by Congress 5 years ago. The legislation this rule provides for consideration would now permanently extend the authorization for this bipartisan program. And the National Park Service has recommended this permanent reauthorization of the network. Everyone agrees that the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network is a good program. That's had a positive impact on the preservation and recreation within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

I would also like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that we on the Rules Committee have made every amendment on this legislation submitted by the Republican minority for consideration. This will allow for both a full debate and a vote on every item of legislation with which the Republican minority has issue.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on the previous question and on the rule.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 1233 and the underlying bill, H.R. 5540—Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network Continuing Authorization Act. I believe this is a fair rule that provides ample time for debate on this important matter and also makes in order the only amendment that was submitted to the Rules Committee on this bill.

But I also want to take this opportunity to set the record straight on the claims made on energy policy during this debate by the other side of the aisle. I would like to submit for the RECORD the following statement released by Speaker PELOSI talking about the significant action taken by this Congress to address the energy concerns of our Nation and also about the recordbreaking profits of oil companies in these times of rising fuel prices.

OIL COMPANIES REAP BILLIONS IN ROYALTY RELIEF

Americans are paying record high prices at the pump and the price of oil continues to skyrocket. But thanks to energy policies put forward by President Bush and the previous Republican-led Congresses, oil companies are making tens of billions of dollars in record profits. According to news reports, a new draft report from the Government Accountability Office estimates oil companies will avoid paying roughly \$53 billion in royalty payments to taxpayers for deep water drilling contracts on public lands in the Gulf of Mexico. These contracts were awarded between 1996 and 2000 after the Republican-led Congress passed the "Deep Water Royalty Relief Act" in 1995.

\$17.82: Price of barrel of oil in 1995 [EIA, Historical Tables, 11/8/95].

\$124.33: Price of barrel of oil yesterday [6/3/08].

598%: Percent increase from 1995 to today.

\$1.07: Gallon of regular unleaded gasoline in 1995 [EIA Historical Tables, 11/8/95].

\$3.98: Gallon of regular unleaded gasoline today [AAA, 6/4/08].

272%: Percent increase from 1995 to today.

\$123.3 billion: Oil Company profits, 2007.

\$36.9 billion: Oil Company profits—1st Quarter this year.

For years, Democrats in Congress have fought to roll back some of the royalty relief given to Big Oil companies, while Republicans have blocked these efforts. In the first 100 hours of the New Direction Congress, the House passed H.R. 6 to require oil companies, which have not paid royalties for deepwater drilling contracts in the Gulf region as a result of the 1998 and 1999 leases, to pay their fair share in order to be eligible for new federal leases for drilling. That provision was also included in the House version of the Energy Independence bill but did not make it into the final House-Senate passed package due to Republican opposition.

This "holiday" from paying royalties was supposed to end when the price of oil reached about \$40 a barrel. Instead, the Bush Administration has continued to provide royalty-free oil from public lands, as the price of oil has now risen to over three times the intended trigger.

The New Direction Congress is committed to bringing real relief to hardworking Americans struggling with high gas prices and putting the needs of families before the interests of the oil companies. Below is a list of action the Democratic-led Congress has taken so far:

PASSED THIS SPRING

Strategic Petroleum Reserve Fill Suspension and Consumer Protection Act—Congress has enacted legislation to suspend the fill of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, starting June 30th and through the end of the year, as long as the price of crude oil remains above \$75 per barrel. This is a critical first step for hardworking families, businesses and the economy, which in the past has brought gas prices down. The President, who was previously opposed, suspended shipments and signed the bill because of overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress.

Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act—This legislation will extend and expand tax

incentives for renewable energy, retain and create hundreds of thousands of green jobs, spur American innovation and business investment, and cut taxes for millions of Americans. These provisions are critical to creating and preserving hundreds of thousands of good-paying green collar American jobs. A recent study showed that allowing the renewable energy incentives to expire would lead to about 116,000 jobs being lost in the wind and solar industries alone through the end of 2009.

The OPEC and Big Oil Companies Accountability Bill—This bill will combat record gas prices by authorizing lawsuits against oil cartel members for oil price fixing, and creating an Antitrust Task Force to crack down on oil companies engaged in anti-competitive behavior or market manipulation. President Bush has threatened to veto this bill.

OTHER RECENT ACTION

Energy Independence and Security Act in 2007—Historic energy legislation with provisions to combat oil market manipulation, increase fuel efficiency to 35 miles per gallon in 2020—the first congressional increase in more than three decades, and promote the use of more affordable American biofuels. The initial version of this bill included a provision to roll back the royal relief given to Big Oil companies for deepwater drilling contracts in the Gulf region. Unfortunately, this provision did not make it into the final House-Senate passed package. Signed into law on December 19, 2007. Under new requirements in the Energy Independence Law and pressure from Congress, the FTC announced in May it would begin the rulemaking process to implement the market manipulation provision.

Reduces our dependence on foreign oil—cutting our consumption of oil by 2.9 million gallons per year in 2030—more than what we currently import from all Persian Gulf countries combined.

Lowers energy costs for consumers with oil prices projected to decline from more than \$100 per barrel to \$57 per barrel in 2016 (in 2006 dollars) in part due to the new energy law.

The new fuel standard for cars and trucks will save American families \$700 to \$1,000 per year at the pump.

Reduces global warming emissions by 2030 by up to 24 percent of what the U.S. needs to do to help save the planet.

Building, appliance, and lighting efficiency standards will save consumers \$400 billion through 2030.

Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act—This legislation would end unnecessary subsidies to Big Oil companies, invest in clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency, and help reduce global warming. The bill includes provisions that will generate hundreds of thousands of green jobs including an estimated 70,000 solar energy jobs, more than 20,000 biodiesel jobs, and protect an additional 75,000 wind industry jobs. President Bush has threatened to veto this bill.

Energy Price Gouging Prevention Act—This bill will provide immediate relief to consumers by giving the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) the authority to investigate and punish those who artificially inflate the price of energy. It will ensure the Federal Government has the tools it needs to adequately respond to energy emergencies and prohibit price gouging—with a priority on refineries and big oil companies. President Bush has threatened to veto this bill.

No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels (NOPEC) Act—Legislation to enable the Department of Justice to take legal action against foreign nations for participating in

oil cartels that drive up oil prices globally and in the United States. President Bush has threatened to veto this bill.

Energy Market Manipulation Prevention—The new Farm Bill increases Commodity Futures Trading Commission oversight authority to detect and prevent manipulation of energy prices. President Bush vetoed this bill, but the Congress has overridden that veto.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS of Washington is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 1233 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF WASHINGTON

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 3. Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution or the operation of the previous question, it shall be in order to consider any amendment to the bill which the proponent asserts, if enacted, would have the effect of lowering the national average price per gallon of regular unleaded gasoline. Such amendments shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for thirty minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived except those arising under clause 9 of rule XXI. For purposes of compliance with clause 9(a)(3) of rule XXI, a statement submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the proponent of such amendment prior to its consideration shall have the same effect as a statement actually printed.

(The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's *Precedents of the House of Representatives*, (VI, 308-311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what

they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from Congressional Quarterly's "American Congressional Dictionary": "If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business."

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. ARCURI. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, given the stated concerns of borrowing by the majority, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his inquiry.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that pursuant to rule XXVIII of the Rules of the House, upon adoption of the conference report on the budget by both the House and the Senate, the Clerk of the House will be instructed to prepare a joint resolution adjusting the public debt limit; is that correct?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is correct.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, further inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his inquiry.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, am I further correct that by operation of rule XXVIII, upon adoption of this conference report by both the House and the Senate, this joint

resolution adjusting the debt limit will be considered as passed by the House and transmitted to the Senate?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Further inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his inquiry.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, will there be a separate vote in the House on passing this joint resolution adjusting the debt limit upwards?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Not by operation of rule XXVIII.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Further inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by operation of this rule, will the vote by which the conference report is passed by the House be considered the vote on passage of the joint resolution adjusting the debt limit?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is correct.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. CON. RES. 70, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1214, I call up the conference report on the Senate concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 70) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2009 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2008 and 2010 through 2013.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1214, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of May 20, 2008, at page H4217.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to that rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, every year the Budget Committee has one all-important task, and that's to outline a budget for Congress to follow. Today, we do just that as we pass the conference agreement on the budget for fiscal 2009. The Senate passed the conference agreement just yesterday.

Passing a budget is never an easy task. This, in fact, will be the first time in 8 years that Congress has passed a concurrent budget resolution in an election year. Our conference agreement charts a new course. It returns the budget to balance reaching a surplus of \$22 billion in the year 2012 and staying in surplus through 2013. Our budget adheres to pay-as-you-go