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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. McNULTY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

June 10, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL R. McNULTY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 25 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 9:50 a.m.

GAS PRICE RELIEF FOR CONSUMERS ACT OF 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KAGEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, last month, I had the opportunity and the pleasure to work with the bipartisan majority of 221 Democrats and 103 Republicans, including the entire Wisconsin delegation, to pass the Gas Price Relief for Consumers Act of 2008. This will in time decrease gas prices for everyone and will make certain that no one is able to manipulate oil prices and to control the free markets.

One year ago, crude oil was selling for \$65 a barrel, and all of us were paying around \$3 per gallon at the pump. We thought things were bad then. The cost per barrel for crude oil has more than doubled since last year while, this week, we are forced to pay in northeast Wisconsin over \$4 per gallon. Yet this is taking place during a recession when demand for oil is down. This is not the way of the free marketplace.

Like you, I was more than a little surprised to learn that, during this past January of 2008, we had so much oil right here in the United States that American oil companies were exporting 335,000 barrels of diesel per day to Europe and to Mexico. Enough is enough.

The Gas Price Relief for Consumers Act that we passed would allow us to attack gas price manipulation, something we do not currently have the authority to do. It would authorize as well an antitrust task force within the Department of Justice to begin to root out any anticompetitive activities and price manipulation in the speculative and volatile futures markets. For the first time, it would instruct the Federal Government to evaluate the damaging effects of past oil company mergers and acquisitions and these effects that they have had on our families and on small businesses alike.

This is the first step in beginning to reestablish a free and open marketplace in the world's oil delivery, something that Teddy Roosevelt attempted in the early 1900s.

My friends, we are today no further advanced in establishing a free and open marketplace than we were in 1910, but all of us who live in Wisconsin are struggling to fill our tanks today, and we need relief as fast as possible, and that's why I and an overwhelming number of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle passed this act to begin to cut gas prices immediately, realizing it will require some time to reverse the failed energy policies of the

recent past. If studies show we don't have enough oil refineries, then let's ask the question: Is it time that we build refineries on each side of the Rocky Mountains?

Skyrocketing gasoline prices are crippling family budgets and profits for small businesses everywhere in the country. Our long-term energy solutions, however, must include creating a new national energy policy, implementing provisions like those I fought to include in the new farm bill that will promote alternative sources of energy, leaving behind, once and for all, all of the losing ideas that we have had, namely, the drill-and-burn and drill-and-burn philosophy and policy of the Bush and Cheney administration. We cannot drill and burn our way out of this energy crisis.

Although there are many causes for today's record-high gas prices, we should not be afraid to take on specific steps today to ensure that prices for middle class families and small businesses come down. That is why we have given the Department of Justice these new tools to, in effect, put a cop back on the beat, making certain that those who are profiting from our pain at the pump will be held accountable.

With regard to the facts of the situation, let's look at some of the facts here, at the United States' oil facts. We, the people, have leased 42 million acres to oil companies, and of the 42 million acres, they are using 12 million. What else is going on?

Since the year 1980, we have lost over 200 refineries, decreasing our capability to produce more oil and diesel when we require it. What else is going on?

The outer banks. Everyone is talking about leasing the outer banks, the Outer Continental Shelf. Well, 82 percent of that property has already been leased, and they're not drilling. Some people have asked: Why aren't we drilling in ANWR? By drilling in ANWR, what are we going to get?

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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This is an old idea. If we took all of the oil out of ANWR, it would drop, economists say, the cost at the pump by one to two pennies per gallon, and that would take place 10 or 20 years from now. Furthermore, there is no guarantee whatsoever that the companies bringing the oil out of ANWR would deliver it to the United States citizens. It may go to Japan or to Europe or to the highest bidder. So ANWR and drilling, drilling and burning is not the solution.

What is going on in our marketplace? Recent investigations and testimony here in the House and in the Senate have shown that there is a concentration where pension funds are now beginning to invest more and more since the year 2000 into our commodities futures market. So it is now time to ask the question: Isn't it appropriate that we ask you, if you're buying oil, to take possession of what you buy?

FRANKLIN L. "JAKE" FLAKE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) for 2 minutes.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, flags at the State Capitol in Arizona are flying at half-staff this week to honor the life of Jake Flake.

Jake leaves behind a legacy of service from school boards to irrigation districts to hospital governing boards to the Boy Scouts of America to the Farm Credit Association to countless other organizations. You name it; Jake Flake ran it; raised money for it; rescued it or improved it.

But it was in Arizona's State legislature that he became best known and loved across the State, particularly during his term as Speaker of the House. One of Arizona's last genuine cowboy legislators, his perspective, his insight and his counsel is simply irreplaceable.

To his wife, Mary Louise, Jake was a loving husband. To his 13 children, he was a devoted father. To his 55 grandchildren, he was an adoring grandfather. To his church, he was a faithful servant. To his community, he was a loyal advocate. To his beloved State of Arizona, he was a statesman.

To this lowly Congressman, he was a caring uncle and mentor, and I will miss him dearly.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 10 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, Your provident love is revealed today as it was revealed in the scriptures and in the early days of this Nation's history. Lord, after Your servant Moses had died, You spoke again to Your people and Joshua, the son of Nun. You said, "Prepare now to cross the Jordan with all the people. Enter the land I stretch out before you. No one can stand against you as long as you live in My presence. I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not leave you nor will I forsake you."

In this millennium, we as a Nation need to cross over some turbulent waters and enter into a new terrain. Lord, we must face a new environment with a need for resourceful energy as we seek economic security and global peace.

Give us Your confidence as we once again hear Your words of promise: Be firm and steadfast so that you may lead this people to the secure and prosperous land which I promised to your ancestors. I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not leave you nor will I forsake you, now or forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. HALL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HALL of New York led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

DOMESTIC OIL DRILLING

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

Mr. HALL of New York. Madam Speaker, over the weekend, gas reached the \$4 national average for the first time in our Nation's history. The majority in Congress has worked to combat these prices by advancing new energy solutions and efforts to protect consumers. The standard refrain from the oil companies and their allies is, "We need to drill for more oil here at home." I would ask them, "Who is stopping you?"

The oil company myth is that we need to open up the Arctic refuge and give the oil company a free hand to go wherever and whenever they want to

chase oil. The reality, however, is that about 75 percent of the oil in the United States is on land that is already open for production, but less than one-third of that land is actually being used by the oil companies.

They are literally sitting on 10,000 permits and millions of acres of leased land that would let them start pulling more oil out of the ground here at home. So I say to the oil company advocates, start drilling for more domestic supply. Start drilling on the lands that are already open, and stop posturing while American drivers are in pain at the pump.

REDUCE THE PRICE AT THE PUMP

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, you know that the price at the pump is what everyone is talking about. And in my district in Tennessee, moms are now spending over \$100 more to fill up the tanks than they were when the Democrats took the gavel in both the House and the Senate. It costs over \$100 a month more to fill up the tank of an average minivan. We have seen the price of a gallon of gas go from \$2.26 to \$4 a gallon.

Madam Speaker, there is a reason for this. And we on the Republican side have solutions for this problem. It is time to waive the gas tax. It is time to waive the ethanol mandates. It is time to waive the requirements for boutique fuels. And it is time for Americans to explore for American energy on American soil.

There is a way to address this. There are bills that are filed. There is action that can be taken. I encourage my Democrat colleagues, encourage your leadership to rise to the challenge, reduce the price at the pump.

BIG OIL NEEDS TO DRILL WHERE THEY HOLD LEASES

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

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, President Bush and congressional Republicans continue to blame today's record gas prices on our refusal to open more land up for drilling. They claim that if we allowed big oil to drill more, gas prices would fall. What Republicans neglect to say is that the number of drilling permits increased dramatically over the last 5 years from 3,800 permits in 2002 to 7,500 last year.

That's right. Big oil is actually getting access to more land to drill, but is doing nothing to bring down the price of gas. Big oil has access to millions of acres of Federal land. But for some reason, they have yet to do any drilling. According to a new Natural Resources Committee report, oil and gas companies hold leases to nearly 68 million