

every solution, including clean, renewable hydropower, non-emitting nuclear power, clean coal technology, wind power, and domestic exploration and development.

It has been over 20 years since President Ronald Reagan called on Congress to lease ANWR. It has been over 30 years since a new refinery has come on line. Since then, America has paid the price for delay, and we are paying the price every time we pull up to the pump.

DEMOCRATIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS ON THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, for years, President Bush has prioritized the needs of the wealthiest few while taking us deep into debt and into an economic recession. In the meantime, most Americans have been forgotten. That is, until the Democrats took control of Congress last year.

We were the first to recognize that our economy was headed for a recession and pushed the President to join us in passing the economic stimulus package that provided assistance to middle-income Americans. While that was a good start, we know that more needs to be done to help those who are not prospering under this Bush economy. That is why we extended unemployment insurance for the growing number of Americans looking for work and why we tackled the housing foreclosure crisis, so that millions of Americans can keep their homes. We also support a second economic stimulus plan that invests in America, rather than in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, House Democrats are serious about working in a bipartisan fashion to turn this economy around, and the best way to do that is to prioritize the needs of hardworking, middle-class Americans.

INCREASING SUPPLY TO LOWER GAS PRICES

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, it is really simple: If you want to help rural small town poor individuals in this country, we have to get the price of gas down. Here is the problem: January 2001, the price of a barrel of crude oil was \$23. When this majority came in, it was \$58. Now it is \$134. What does that translate into? From \$1.45 to \$2.23 to \$4.07. Add climate change, 50 cents additional. \$4.55, if you calculate climate change.

What is the solution? The solution is all of the above. Outer Continental Shelf exploration and recovery, coal-to-liquid technologies, solar and wind, renewable fuels. We need to do all the above, and you all need to help us.

We need to bring a bill to the floor that brings on more supply. We are willing to work with you. More supply is the only thing that we can do to bring down the cost of fuel which will help middle- and low-income Americans. We ask you to join us.

MISTAKES MADE IN AIR FORCE TANKER CONTRACT

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, last week it was revealed that the Air Force made a serious mistake in comparing the costs of tanker aircraft proposals offered by Northrop Grumman/Airbus and Boeing.

When the Air Force awarded this \$40 billion contract to Northrop Grumman/Airbus, it repeatedly said that the cost of the two planes was one of their top selection criteria. However this latest revelation, supported by both companies, undercuts the Air Force's assertion that they picked the most cost-effective aircraft and casts doubt on whether the two planes were evaluated fairly on the other criteria.

Take, for example, fuel usage. The Airbus tanker uses 24 percent more fuel than Boeing, about 400 gallons more per hour, and over 2 billion gallons of fuel each year. Yet the Air Force continues to claim that the Airbus tanker is the best value over the long term.

At a time of soaring fuel costs that calls into question whether the most cost-effective choice was made for our taxpayers and our airmen for a plane with a lifespan of 40 years, the selection of tanker aircraft will have far-reaching implications for our Nation's industrial base and our security. The Air Force must get it right and rebid this critical decision.

DRILL NOTHING CONGRESS

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Drill Nothing Congress is still determined to drive the price of gasoline up by not allowing offshore drilling for crude oil and natural gas.

Americans think we are held hostage by OPEC and dictator Chavez for our crude oil, but the real culprit is Congress. Congress holds the keys to freedom from OPEC and the little dictator, but will not unlock the big door to independence.

Congress should lift the offshore drilling ban in the Gulf coast, the east coast and even the sacred west coast. Then let each State and its people decide whether or not to drill off their shores.

Congress should let States receive a portion of the oil lease revenues oil companies pay Uncle Sam for the privilege to drill and States to use this additional revenue to fund education or whatever they wish.

The Drill Nothing Congress seems to want gasoline prices to continue to rise to punish Americans for driving gasoline-powered vehicles. Congress is the problem. In the court of American public opinion, Congress is wrong for its hardheaded, absurd policy of don't drill in America. Meanwhile, gasoline continues to rise in price.

And that's just the way it is.

DEMOCRATS TAKE ACTION ON RECORD HIGH GAS PRICES

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

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, record high gas prices are forcing most American families to make some tough decisions this summer. While prices remain around \$4 a gallon, some families have to decide if they should take that planned summer vacation or not, while others are trying to determine what normal everyday drives can be eliminated because they simply cannot afford it.

This Democratic Congress recognizes the financial hardship these record prices are creating for everyone. That is why we have passed seven bills in the last couple of months to help lower prices.

We passed legislation in a strong, bipartisan fashion suspending sending more oil to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve until the end of the year, which will result in a 25 cents a gallon price reduction in July. We also passed legislation holding OPEC and big oil accountable for price fixing and cracking down on oil companies engaged in market manipulation.

Mr. Speaker, as Americans face continued pain at the pump, we should work in a strong bipartisan fashion to pass commonsense legislation that provides some immediate relief.

LISTENING TO CONSTITUENTS ON ENERGY PRICE INCREASES

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

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, as Congress continues its debate on domestic energy policy, we must be aware of what our constituents are saying, both at home and at work.

During this past week, I had the pleasure of touring two manufacturing plants in my district. These plants provide hundreds of good-paying jobs and produce high-quality products for our Nation's economy. During my tours, the management of these companies said that hands down, rising energy costs are their number one concern.

As energy costs rise, production costs rise as well at these plants. As production costs rise, companies all over the United States face competition from foreign manufacturers who have lower labor costs and, in some instances, lower fuel costs. Countries like China and India, who are currently exploring

many forms of domestic energy production, are able to offer lower production costs directly tied to their lower energy costs.

Under the current congressional leadership, Congress will not even consider domestic exploration and recovery of an abundance of energy resources that we have here in the United States. With these energy resources, we can grow our own economy, retain American jobs and prevent them from being taken overseas.

The bottom line is that energy equals manufacturing which equals jobs, and we in Congress must remember that as our energy debate continues.

NO BAN EXISTS ON OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, there is no ban on offshore oil drilling. In fact, there are 33.5 million acres offshore leased to the oil industry from which they are extracting nothing and they are not developing. They say, well, they don't have the drill bits or they don't have the time or whatever. The Republicans say they need more leases.

They don't need more leases. They need to develop what is out there, plain and simple. Think of the former Naval Petroleum Reserve. It is right up there in Alaska next to ANWR, 13.4 billion barrels of known reserves, drilled and capped by the oil industry, leased by Bill Clinton, not producing a single drop.

But, oh, let's go to ANWR. There might be some there.

Come on, guys. They are not developing what they have now. There is a 20-year supply out there underneath their idle leases that could double our domestic production, and, plain and simple, they haven't developed it. Then when they are done with that, then we can have a debate about more leasing in other places.

TIME TO START UTILIZING AMERICAN ENERGY RESOURCES

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to a lot of rhetoric on the other side about it is time for a change in America. I agree. It is time for the Democrats to change their votes and stop voting against producing energy that belongs to Americans.

One of the things that we do every morning, and we got the opportunity this morning, is to write Hugo Chavez another check for \$170 million. We wrote one yesterday, and we will write one tomorrow. Just think of what we could do with \$170 million, investing it right here in American jobs.

When we bring up ANWR, 86 percent of the Democrats voted against that.

When we bring up coal-to-liquid technology, 78 percent of the Democrats voted against that. When we bring up developing oil shale exploration, 86 percent of the Democrats voted against that. The Outer Continental Shelf, 83 percent of the Democrats voted against that. Refinery capacity, we are importing gasoline into this country, 96 percent of the Democrats are opposed to that.

It is time for change. It is time to start producing American resources.

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD FOR ECONOMY

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, nearly one in five unemployed Americans have lost their unemployment benefits because it has taken them longer than 26 weeks to find a new job. Obviously, most companies are laying off. Imagine not having a job, losing unemployment benefits, and then trying to pay for gas at the pump and food at the grocery store.

This Democratic Congress knows it is tougher to find a job when the economy is not producing them. That is why we passed legislation last week giving these workers an additional 13 weeks of unemployment benefits.

In my home State of Texas, there are more than 45,000 workers who have already exhausted their unemployment insurance and 115,000 more that are expected to exhaust their benefits by March of next year. This legislation would help all of these people. But President Bush and his Republican allies here in the House oppose our efforts, even though the President supported a similar extension back in 2002 when the economic situation is not nearly as bad as it is now.

Mr. Speaker, millions of American workers need help from this Congress today. Washington Republicans should reconsider their opposition to this important legislation.

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BROADCASTER FREEDOM ACT

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, the American people cherish freedom. That's why President Reagan repealed the so-called Fairness Doctrine back in 1987 that actually regulated the content of radio airwaves for more than four decades.

Today, while some of the most powerful Democrats in Congress make plans to restore this Depression-era regulation, Republicans have taken action. We introduced the Broadcaster Freedom Act that would take the power to restore the Fairness Doctrine

away from this or any future President, and we filed a discharge petition to force an up or down vote. But in 245 days, not one single House Democrat has signed the discharge petition for broadcast freedom.

I offer my Democrat colleagues this respectful challenge. If you cherish freedom, you cherish the freedom of the press. If you cherish the airwaves of America, left, right and center, let's make this Fourth of July Radio Independence Day.

Sign the discharge petition for broadcast freedom by Independence Day.

AIR FORCE TANKER DECISION

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, the GAO is scheduled this week to decide whether or not to overturn the Air Force decision on awarding the tanker contract to Airbus. We have already heard this morning that the Air Force has discovered that they made numerous mistakes in how they calculated the cost.

There is another huge issue. We hope the GAO does the right thing and overturns that decision, but even if they don't, we have to keep in mind that our country has a trade action against Airbus right now for unfairly and illegally subsidizing their products, the very product that the Air Force has decided to buy.

If we want to enforce our trade laws against our trading partners to our advantage, it makes no sense whatsoever to reward precisely the illegal, unfair behavior that we are trying to stop them from doing. Giving them this contract does that, and we should overturn it either by the GAO or by Congress if they don't and not reward unfair subsidization by our foreign competitors.

GAS PRICES

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Americans are fed up paying over \$4 per gallon for gas and nearly \$5 for diesel. The price of a gallon of gas has spiked \$2 since Democrats took control of Congress in January of 2007.

It's high time we did something about the skyrocketing cost of gasoline and allow us to explore for oil right here in America. To bring down the price of gasoline, we need to expand U.S. refinery capacity, tap America's own energy resources, streamline the number of fuel blends and promote the use of clean, alternative energy. With a nationwide price for gasoline now over \$4 a gallon, it's no surprise a recent Gallup Poll showed 57 percent of Americans now favor further exploration for oil right here in America. These folks are right.