

Navy, and especially the crew of the McNerney, for their tireless efforts to stem the flow of illegal drugs into our Nation.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE RISK OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION CREATED BY THE ACCUMULATION OF WEAPONS-USABLE FISSILE MATERIAL IN THE TERRITORY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-126)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the emergency declared in Executive Order 13159 of June 21, 2000, with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation is to continue beyond June 21, 2008.

It remains a major national security goal of the United States to ensure that fissile material removed from Russian nuclear weapons pursuant to various arms control and disarmament agreements is dedicated to peaceful uses, subject to transparency measures, and protected from diversion to activities of proliferation concern. The accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation and maintain in force these emergency authorities to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 18, 2008.

AMERICAN ENERGY NEEDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 18, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, it is great to be back tonight to address some of the concerns that most Americans have today, and that is the cost of energy.

Let me start out by saying that I have gotten numerous calls and e-mails concerning the price that the average American is paying for gas today. As most Americans realize, gas is up over \$4 a gallon. When the 110th Congress started and the new majority took over, after telling the American people that they had a commonsense plan to bring down the skyrocketing price of gas, and keep in mind at the time it was about \$2.20 a gallon, we have seen the price of gas go up to \$4.05 now.

I have had many people call and ask me if I had signed the petition on several Internet sites, such as AmericanSolutions.com and some other sites that were out there where the American people could go and sign a petition telling us, Madam Speaker, Members of Congress, that they wanted us to drill now, drill here, and bring down the price of gas.

And so as I was thinking about that, I thought, you know, we are hearing from our constituents about they want us to do something, to take action, to bring down the price of gas because that's what we do in this Congress, Madam Speaker, is we are here to help the American people, and especially with their pocketbook.

So as I got to thinking about that, I said you know we all hear from our constituents, but sometimes our constituents don't know how we really feel because a lot of times these issues are not brought to the floor, or when they are brought to the floor they are so convoluted and so hard to understand that someone could go home and answer their constituency as to why they voted for a bill or why they voted against a bill because you could probably take either side on any piece of legislation that is passed in this body. I said I need to come up with the simplest thing that I can to make sure that the American people understand and there can't be any wiggle room from their Member of Congress where they stand on bringing down energy prices.

And so I came up with this petition. What this petition says is "American energy solutions for lower gas prices. Bring onshore oil online. Bring deep-water oil online. Bring new refineries online." We have not opened a refinery in this country since the late 1970s.

So what I did, this is the petition we have had on the floor all today for Members to sign. What it says is very simple; very, very, simple, "I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans." That's about as simple as it gets. It's not politics. It's not gotcha politics, it is the kind of change that I think the Amer-

ican people want, honesty and common sense. Honesty and common sense.

So today we have had a total to date of 126 people out of 435 sign this petition. So 126 out of the 435, and I hope that it will continue. But I hope, Madam Speaker, that people understand that they can go to House.gov/Westmoreland and find out if their Congressman has signed the petition or not. And if not, you might want to ask them why because the thing is pretty clear. It just says "I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans."

That's about as simple as it gets. So we are proud to have this petition and we are proud of the American people, Madam Speaker, for going to these Web sites to sign these petitions to let us know how you feel about paying these outlandish gas prices at the pump.

What I want to do is make sure that the American people know how their Congressman feels about the pain they are suffering at the pump.

I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Let me just say that some Members of Congress do more work than others, and I want to congratulate you on taking the time and making the effort to get Members on record as to how they feel about drilling for oil and natural gas to get our energy prices down and get the price of gasoline at the pump down. You are to be congratulated. I watched you on television the other night, and I just wish you had more time to get into more of the details because what you say on the floor ought to be heard by people all across this country.

I took a 5-minute special order before this one, and I didn't get a chance to go into some of the issues in depth that the American people ought to know about because they hear so much on both sides of the aisle. On that side of the aisle they say, oh, my gosh, the oil companies have so many leases, they ought to drill on those leases, both on American soil and also on the Outer Continental Shelf.

The fact of the matter is there are an awful lot of leases already out there, given to the oil companies, but they are not going to drill in those areas unless they know there is oil there. And that's why there are seismic tests that take place. And those tests don't take place until they get the lease. And that lease is for 5 to 10 years. If they don't move on that lease within 5 to 10 years, then they have to give the lease up and it is re-bid, and somebody else might go for that lease.

But chances are they will do everything they can to find oil in that 5 or 10-year period because they don't want to lose a lease that has a lot of oil within it. So they do seismic tests to find out if there is oil there.

If they drill on a lease that is next to another lease, sometimes they do test drills, if it looks like it is a promising lease or leases around that area, they

are going to drill on all of them. When they drill for oil off the Outer Continental Shelf or on the Continental Shelf, it costs \$2 billion, up to \$2 billion to erect a platform and a derrick and the drilling process, to drill down and get that oil out of the ocean.

An oil company is not going to do that unless they think that there is oil down there. Why would you spend \$2 billion unless you know there is oil there. That's why they get the leases and do the seismic testing. Once they do the seismic testing, if it looks like there is oil there, then they drill. They have to go through a very strenuous program of getting more and different kinds of leases so they can drill. But once they find there is oil on those leases that are already available, they will drill there because they want to get the oil, they want to make the money.

The problem we have is we are only using 3 percent of the Outer Continental Shelf. The other 97 percent we are not drilling on. That really is troubling because there may not be an awful lot of oil in that 3 percent where they have the permits right now. But the other 97 percent, we know there is oil out there.

I would like to give a couple of facts that I think my colleagues and the people of this country ought to know.

□ 1845

We use 21.5 million barrels of oil a day. ANWR, and I think my colleagues talked about this, is the size of Dulles Airport. You're not going to kill the environment of Alaska if you drill in the ANWR. Alaska's almost three times the size of Texas, and the size of the Dulles Airport is not much bigger than Capitol Hill here, and we could drill there in an environmentally safe way and get up to 1 to 2 million barrels of oil a day.

ANWR has 10.4 billion barrels of oil, more than double the proven reserves in Texas. And in April, the U.S. Geological Survey announced there was estimated, now get this, 3.65 billion barrels of oil and 1.85 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in Montana and North Dakota.

On our coast lines there's 8.5 billion barrels of oil and 29.3 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. And you can go on and on and on and on. We have the gas. We have the oil necessary to become energy independent. We can get it in an environmentally safe way. And as my colleague from Georgia has said time and time again, we need to go after it.

We shouldn't be giving our money to the Saudis. They're not our best buddies. They're supporting these madrassas that teach Wahabiism, which is a radical form of Islam, all over the world. And they're using our money that they get from us buying the oil over there, and we can get this energy right here in America. And we can also, as my colleague has said, bring the price of gasoline down. And that's what I think Americans want all over this country.

The problem is, they may be confused because this young lady that was just down here, a new Member, she came down and started quoting all these statistics like there's this many leases and that many leases and why aren't they drilling there because they can drill.

You're not going to drill unless a seismic test shows there's oil and you do a test well in the ocean. You're not going to drill on land unless there's a study that shows that there's oil down there. We know that there's oil in the ANWR and so we ought to drill there.

All I can say to my colleague and to anybody that's paying attention across this country is that we need to get all of the Congressmen on board. My colleague's working his tail off to get it done. We need to get everybody on board so we can drill for oil and natural gas in this country, get the price of energy down, get the price of gas at the pump down to way below where it is now. And we can do it, but what we have to do is get every Congressman in this body on board and in supporting drilling in America. We can do it.

And the American people have done it in the past. They've written letters in when we tried to hold, when we tried to tax the interest on their savings in the banks, they sent us cards that looked like snow coming down in this place. And we ended up reversing ourselves and saying we weren't going to tax or collect taxes at the bank when they got interest on their savings. They didn't like that.

So if the American people, and I say this to my colleague from Georgia, if the American people want us to drill in America they need to contact their Congressman and say get on with it. Quit messing around. Drill for oil here. We want to be energy independent. We've been talking about it for over 30 years. It's time to act.

With that, I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I thank my friend from Indiana for being here with me and supporting this initiative that we have. And I want to just hit on a couple of points that Congressman BURTON made.

You can go to house.gov/westmoreland and find out who has signed a petition that basically just says, I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas for Americans. There are also some links to some other sites where you can get some of these energy facts that we're giving you and find the truth for yourself.

One of the things that he mentioned was the size of ANWR and where we're drilling. And he mentioned that the drilling site is about the size of Reagan Airport. And it is, in comparison to the total State of South Carolina. Here is the comparison of ANWR to the Continental United States. You can see the size of Alaska compared to the United States. This is the wildlife refuge here, and we will show you, in a moment, Madam Speaker, what this wildlife, the refuge area looks like.

Here is the drilling site up here. So you can see that this is, the ANWR, the wildlife is about the size of South Carolina. And where they're talking about drilling is about the size of Reagan Airport, in comparison. You can see how much land is there.

The other thing the gentleman from Indiana mentioned was the amount of land; 68 million acres is what the majority party claims is out there, and that may be a true statement. I can tell you that 54 percent of the exploratory holes that have been drilled between 2002 and 2007, 54 percent of them were dry holes.

Now, we all want to use common sense. We don't go to the hardware store to buy groceries. So why would you drill somewhere that there's no oil? You wouldn't do it. Or no natural gas. Why would you do that? You would not do it.

And so after they do all of these tests that they do that is required by the government for them to do, they find out on these leases that have been offered up by our government that there is no oil. There is no energy resource there, so why are we saying drill there?

Now, also I've heard that these energy companies are stockpiling these leases. Well, that's not true. It's already in law that if they don't drill, they lose it. If they do not go with the terms of the lease, they lose that lease. And so if they have a problem with them not drilling where they said they would drill in the time that they said they would drill, according to the lease agreement with the government, that's not their problem. That's our problem, that we're not enforcing the laws that we have. And so, you know, there's a lot of myth going on here, Madam Speaker.

But I did want to bring up one thing because I think this is really what gets my blood boiling when I think about our dependence on foreign oil. Let's look at Mr. Castro and Mr. Chavez down here. And I want to read something to the American people, Madam Speaker, and to you and to the people in this House. It says, in a recent interview on Al Jazeera, Chavez called for the developing nations to unite against U.S. political and economic policies. What can we do regarding the imperialistic power of the United States? We have no choice but to unite, he said. Venezuela's energy alliances with nations such as Cuba, which receives cheap oil, are an example of how we use oil in our war against neo-liberalism, he said.

Another quote, right down here under the picture of him hugging Castro, or as he put it on another occasion, we have invaded the United States, but with our oil.

The next thing over here, Madam Speaker, is a check that American families and businesses write out every day to Hugo Chavez for \$170,250,000. That is a day. That money could be coming to American companies and to

American workers and creating Americans jobs and bringing down the price of gas at the pump for Americans.

Now, we're writing one of our enemies a check for \$170 million a day when we could be using that money to create jobs in this country.

The other thing I think is important to realize is that not only have we not drilled and used our own natural resources for our own citizens, but we've not built any refineries. Our refining capability has not been added to since 1978. We have not built a new refinery.

Now, we are importing, and listen to this—this is not oil, crude oil that we're importing—we are importing gasoline, a product that has been refined in another country, we are importing about 6.9 billion gallons of gasoline, refined crude oil into this country every year, and probably the same amount in diesel.

There is no excuse for us sending our hard-earned dollars to foreign countries when we could be doing it ourselves, and especially, going to the pump and paying over \$4 a gallon when this new majority for the 110th Congress had a commonsense plan to bring down skyrocketing price of gas when it was \$2.20.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Let me just say to the gentleman from Georgia, he mentioned that we haven't built any new oil refineries since the late 1970s, and he's correct. But there's one other thing that he didn't mention. I know he knows this.

In 1981 we had 324 oil refineries. Today we have 148, less than half. There's no way that we can handle the oil that we could get out of the ground to lower the price of gasoline unless we build new refineries. And we've come up with an idea to put it on some of these closed military bases around the country, and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have not seen fit to agree to that.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Last month we had a motion to recommit that demanded that within 90 days we recognized three bases that had been under the BRAC, or the base realignment, to start looking at refineries and it was voted down by the majority.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Yes.

Along those lines, they say, well, it's going to take 10 years if we start drilling. It's going to take 10 years if we start refining it. I don't think that's the case. Most people think in 2 or 3 years we could really be pumping a lot of new oil out of the ground if we were allowed to drill for it, and we could refine it and get it in the gas tanks of the people across this country.

But even if it did take 10 years, when do we start? We were talking about this back during the Carter years in the late seventies. That's 30 years ago. And we haven't done a darn thing about it.

If we're going to keep the cost of energy down, with the demand for energy growing at a very rapid rate around the world, China wants more, everybody

wants more oil to expand their economies, building new roads and everything else. There's a war going on right now for the oil that's available, the energy that's available in this world. If we're going to be able to keep pace, which will help us economically, and, in fact, maybe save us economically, we're going to have to drill in America for oil and gas. We're going to have to get on with the program.

I can't talk to the American people, but if I were talking to the American people, like my colleague from Georgia would like to do, I'd tell them get on with it. Call your Congressman. Write them. Sign all these petitions and tell them we want to be energy independent; we want to drill here in America.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you.

My friend, Mr. PETERSON, who is a real expert on energy, I'm glad you joined us tonight.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Well, it's a delight to join you. It's a historic day. Natural gas hit \$13.28 a thousand cubic feet. That's almost double what it was last year at this time. What that means is Americans heating their 60 million homes this fall will pay almost twice as much to heat them as they did last year, on top of tremendous price increases to travel in their vehicles.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. So if they think the price at the pump is painful, wait till they start trying to stay warm.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. This has all happened without a storm in the gulf, which always escalates prices, without any country having a major coup or problem, or without any terroristic attack on the system. I don't think anybody dreamed that we would have \$135 to \$140 oil at this time of the year. We are in the middle of June. We're not even into the heat of the driving season yet, and here we are with \$13, I mean, we're within a few pennies of the peak of natural gas prices after Katrina.

Dow Chemical made a statement just a week or so ago that in 2002 it cost them \$8 billion for natural gas to run their company. It now costs them \$8 billion a quarter.

Here's what's happened. They used to be 60 percent onshore. Those were great American jobs. They're now 34 percent onshore.

In South America natural gas is a buck and a half. In Russia it's barely over a buck. I mean, there's cheap gas all over the world. If you're making petrochemicals, polymers, plastics, fertilizer, if you're melting steel, melting aluminum, I want to tell you, if this Congress does not change its view on offshore, shale oil and ANWR in the very near future, bricks and glass will be made in Trinidad, South America. They will be shipped here in a day and a half in a boat, and there will not be a blue collar job left in America, because natural gas is the mother's milk of manufacturing and processing.

□ 1900

They use it as an ingredient. Even the skin creams that our women love to soften, that's a derivative of natural gas. Natural gas is one of the most unique—chemists say we should never burn it. It's too valuable. But we are now using a lot of it for electric generation; 23 to 24 percent of our generation is now natural gas. And that is as we cease to permit coal plants around the country, they're all going to be natural gas plants. If the Senate continues its foolishness with carbon taxes and CO₂s, that's all going to push the business to a natural gas which only emits one-third of the CO₂ of other fossil fuels. But we're not preparing. We need to.

Today we had a committee meeting scheduled, and my chart here shows—it's interesting the Democrat talking points say that 80 percent of available resources are available to the American companies. That's not true. Eighty-five percent of our offshore is not available, period. The whole west coast is not available. The whole east coast is not available. About a third of the gulf is not available. That's where the prime oil and gas is in this country. They have it locked up. They want it locked up. They like these high prices because it's forcing Americans to change to other fuels. That is true.

But let me tell you, I'm not sure how long the American economy can handle \$130 oil and \$13 natural gas without collapsing. And once this economy collapses and the world economy goes into a recession, we're going to be a decade digging ourselves out of the hole. There will never be money to balance the budget. There will never be money for heat and helping people winterize their homes. This country is on the verge of losing its economic base.

Cheap energy. I was born one mile from Drakes Well, the first oil well. It changed the world. The whole manufacturing process of the world began in this country because of cheap energy. We've had \$10 oil and \$2 natural gas most of our lifetime. We had a spike in the 1970s, we had a spike in the 1980s, and a spike in the 1990s. We went to renewables. We tried to do other things, but it always came back to cheap gas and cheap oil. Nothing could compete.

Well, folks, there's a philosophy around here that if we don't produce fossil fuels, we're going to produce something else. I'm saying "what." What are we going to produce? If we double wind and solar—and I'm for that in the next 5 years—but that doubling something in 5 years is ambitious. We're still less than one percent of our energy needs.

I mean, there is no renewable. The renewable that has been the most generous to us and the most growth is woody biomass. Nobody talks about woody biomass. Hasn't had any incentive. No tax incentives. There's a million Americans this year probably going to help heat their homes with a wood pellet stove. Burning sawdust pellets. That's biomass. Many companies

in my district—I come from the finest hardwood forest in America, northern Pennsylvania. Lots of mills. Lots of factories. The sawdust now is a byproduct. They heat their factories with it. Some of the coal plants use 20 percent wood waste because it allows them to sneak under the air standards if the coal is just a little dirtier than it should be. So it has found its marketplace.

And the cellulosic ethanol that we're betting on. We have a mandate of 36.5 million gallons of—or 36.5 billion gallons of ethanol annually by 2030. The first 15 to be corn, and we know what's happened there where we're now at \$7.86 corn as the market closed today. It was \$1.80 just a short time ago. We're competing food with fuel. I didn't protest it. I had my concerns. But \$8 corn is not something you can afford to burn.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Absolutely.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Isn't it true that we have a 54 percent tariff on ethanol brought into this country? Fifty-four cents a gallon on ethanol brought into the country, and already right now corn is at \$7.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. What, \$7.86.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And with the devastation that we've had in Iowa, in some of the corn-producing States, it would be nice if we just give a temporary halt to that tariff to get this ethanol in.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. That is true. But I want to make a point there. I'm not against ethanol. After the 15 billion they want to go to—or billion gallons, they want to go to cellulosic.

But we have to remember we have a mandate on cellulosic ethanol that still is in the laboratory. We do not yet have the design of a successful cellulosic ethanol plant that we know will be productive that will compete. So that's pushing.

I wish we were pushing coal to liquids and coal to gas with the same fervor because we know Fisher Tropes and two or three other messes, we could make gasoline, we could make fuel oil, we could make jet fuel out of coal. But no. There has not been much pushing for that.

I am encouraged that the President came out for offshore, but that's a big move. We've been pushing him a long time. He didn't come out quite as strong as I had hoped. He said he would lift the Presidential moratoria if we lifted the congressional moratoria. I think he should have lifted his first and said, I'm lifting the Presidential. You lift. But he didn't. But I want to give him credit for going there.

I want to give candidate McCain credit. He's come out. Offshore. That was not his normal position. And someone said, Well, he's a flip-flopper. Well, folks, when you see the light, when you

see the facts—you know, just a few years ago the argument was we should use theirs. It was cheap. We shouldn't be using ours. Well, that's not true any more. At \$135 a barrel and \$13 a thousand for gas, it's time to use ours.

We enrich Americans. I mean, for us not to create the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of jobs in the production of energy in this country and put Americans to work producing our energy, we could be self-sufficient in natural gas, we could have reasonable natural gas prices. Natural gas could actually fuel a third of our auto fleet. All of our short-hauled vehicles, all of our construction vehicles, all of the little vehicles running around at the airport, all of those could be on clean green natural gas. No NO_x, no SO_x, and a third of the CO₂. It could be compressed gas or it could be propane. Either one. They all can run—that's known technology. Why we're not going down that road, I don't know.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, Mr. PETERSON, let me say this. We have that technology, and there was a push in the late 1990s, mid- to late-1990s to convert gasoline engines to propane. Then the EPA put such testing regulations on the emissions testing for these different types of makes and models of cars, a lot of people just got out of the business. It was not a commonsense thing for EPA to do. They should have gone to these people doing the conversions and said, What can we do to make it easier and faster for you to do this propane conversion and the same thing with natural gas?

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. It's hard for me to understand because natural gas burns cleaner than gasoline. And as we were talking, somewhere between 10 and 50 percent of our gasoline now comes from Europe. How does Europe have extra? Well, they've switched to diesel. They have diesel cars. They have extra capacity.

A year ago in the spring we had very high gasoline prices. Not this spring but last spring. And remember they were higher than they were in the fall when oil was much higher. I think oil was \$60-some a barrel and we had \$3 gas and everybody wondered why. Well, in the spring when we start switching and using more gasoline, Europe was short themselves. They had used more gasoline. They didn't have the surplus they normally supplied us, so they couldn't supply our needs.

So when you don't have enough, the market goes up. We didn't have enough gasoline in the world market, and so we paid higher gasoline prices last spring with \$63 oil than we did last fall with \$85 and \$90 oil. Didn't make any sense, but that is the marketplace because Europe could not give us. But we're dependent on Europe.

But back to natural gas. It just amazes me because here is what scares me: \$13 natural gas is not a world price. That's an American price. We have the highest natural gas prices in the world. So many Members of Congress can't

seem to understand that that it's not a world commodity. It's country by country.

And so when you have the highest prices for natural gas and your company, like Dow Chemical uses \$8 billion a quarter. That's \$32 billion a year. You have got to produce your products where it's cheaper, and when it's a fraction of our cost—it's not like a half or a third—it's a fraction, sometimes, in some of those countries.

So we're going to lose all of the industries. We won't melt steel in this country. We won't bend products. We will be cooking products in other countries because you use a lot of gas for heat. Anything that uses a lot of natural gas, if we don't get that under control—and the silly part of that is, we could be self-sufficient in our total lifetime. There is no shortage of natural gas, onshore and offshore, and this country tried to lock up their own plateau.

In the last appropriations bill they locked up the shale oil in the west, sneaked it in the bill. Of course, the prohibition of drilling offshore is not legislation. It's stuck in the Interior bill. I was here 5 or 6 years before I knew it was there, and when I started talking about it, most Members of Congress didn't know it because it started 28 years ago. We have a vote every year. You know, today that vote was canceled. I'm not quite sure why.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Did the gentleman offer an amendment in the appropriations bill that was voted down?

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. In the first subcommittee last Wednesday we had six Republicans "yes" and nine Democrats "no." Now, it's not totally been a partisan issue. This was the first time they locked up their vote.

This new administration here, the Speaker and her team, have been very good at locking up votes. You have to admire them. They can get people to vote against their districts, vote against what they believe. But they've decided they're not going to open up the Outer Continental Shelf.

Now, we were interested today whether they would still lock them up, whether they could hold them because in 2006 we passed a major offshore bill. We had 40-some Democrat votes. There are a lot of Democrats here who realize energy's important, and to produce your own is not some evil thing. With 67 percent dependency on oil, and half of that comes from unstable, unfriendly countries who gave us our tariffs, it would seem to me that everybody could agree let's eliminate at least half of our foreign dependence; let's stop feeding our enemy; let's stop allowing giving them the cash to buy up our Chrysler building, buy up our companies, buy up our industries. You know, industries in this country are getting purchased by foreign countries, and most of them are people who have our oil money.

I don't think this is the America that Americans want. But I want to tell you

something. I have faith in the American people. There's a debate going on right now. I have been on four different talk shows today. I have been on probably five or six radio shows today. Lots of print media yesterday. I did 15 different discussions. The American people are angry.

Newt Gingrich came out with a poll: 73 percent of Americans want offshore production. Rasmussen came out with a poll Monday: 63 percent in their poll. It's going up daily because this is a discussion going on in this country, and they're mad. They're mad as hell. And they ought to be mad because we are locking—this Congress for 28 years has locked up America's resources that every other country uses.

There is no country in the world—Norway, Sweden, are they environmentally friendly countries? You bet they are. New Zealand, Australia, are they environmentally sensitive countries? You bet. They all produce offshore.

Offshore is not a threat to our beaches, it's not a threat to our shorelines. It's a savior. It's where our cities are, it's where our population is, it's where our refineries are, where our gas lines are.

You know, in New York City in zero weather, sometimes we will pay two and three times the American price for natural gas in zero weather because they can't get enough there. The price when the world is paying 10, they'll pay 25 or 30 for a few days at a time because if we had offshore production, we could feed them their—these cities wouldn't be paying these outrageous prices when cold weather comes.

Last year for the first time—because we use so much for electricity now—last year for the first time in the history of this country, in two summer months when it was really hot, we made so much electricity with natural gas because in a real hot week, all of the peaking plants run all day long. They run all day long because that's the only way to keep the grid up. We actually drew down gas out of the reserve.

See, at this time of the year we don't use all of our gas so we put it in reserve. We're putting \$13 gas in the ground for next winter. Add storage costs, add pipeline charges, and a profit for the gas-distribution company, you're talking about pretty expensive gas. Last year we were putting \$6.50 and \$7 gas in the ground this time of year.

Americans do not know what is coming. The industrial users are already paying 70 percent more this year because it passes through quicker to them. But in my State, PUC, every 90 days they adjust the price. This fall Americans are going to get hit with another bullet. It's going to be expensive home heating. And we should be doing something about it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. We need to be doing something about it, and that's what we're trying to do.

And to my friend from Pennsylvania, and thank you for coming down tonight and helping Mr. BURTON and myself with this because we know that you are an expert on it and that you have been trying to correct a situation. Even when the Republicans were in the majority, you were the lone voice crying in the wilderness about this; and I really wish we would have paid more attention.

But now is the time when natural gas is \$13-plus, the price at the pump is over \$4, the price of oil in a barrel is up to about \$140. And the gentleman mentioned some of the Norwegian countries. And you know Norway, you know, 30 years ago was dependent on foreign oil. And they said, You know what? We're going to do something about it.

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Norway is dependent on tourism, fishing. I mean, they are very conscious of their natural resources. Today, they are the third largest exporter of crude oil in the world.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. If the gentleman would yield, the other success story we all hear about is Brazil. Doesn't everybody say Brazil is independent because of ethanol? Fifteen percent of their energy is ethanol. They went offshore. They just had a huge oil find offshore, but they are self-sufficient. They don't import energy anymore.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And they're celebrating. I saw in the paper where they found that big oil reserve offshore, and the Brazilian people were celebrating over finding it, and we know it's there and can't even get our country to drill.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. We keep hearing from over there that it was all ethanol. Ethanol was just a piece. It was 15 percent. The rest was normal oil and gas energy. But they had a plan.

I think we ought to have a plan for North America. Stop and think about Alaska and Canada. Canada is great. Canada produces oil and gas right off our main coast.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. We import from them.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Fifteen percent of our natural gas comes from them, and they are our largest supplier of oil by far.

Right off the Washington coast they produce. They have produced since 1913 in Lake Erie and sell us the gas. They drill gas only in Lake Erie every summer. They don't do it in the winter, but they do it every summer and sell us the gas. And we aren't even allowed to drill under the lakes horizontally.

It makes no sense what we're doing in this country. Yesterday, I read an article that we ought to be partnering with Russia because they have so much resources and we need to be better friends with them. I'd rather help Mexico because they have great resources but aren't very good at producing

them. They're not very efficient at producing energy. But they have a lot of gas and a lot of oil.

If we had a North American game plan, where Mexico, the United States, and Canada, and Alaska, where we said let's produce our own energy, we could get there. I don't think we can be self-sufficient on our own, I mean that sincerely. I don't see it ever will in our lifetime, but we could be self-sufficient in North America, and we could say to OPEC: "So long, see ya."

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. If the gentleman would yield, first of all, I would really appreciate if I could get the information on natural gas that you just gave us tonight because I was aware that it was a major problem, but I didn't know it was as big a problem as it is and is going to be.

And I'd just like to say something about the polls that show that people are becoming more and more concerned about energy and natural gas and gasoline.

The people are ahead of Congress. The majority, not too long ago, were saying environmental concerns were by far the biggest problem that we face. Now, seventy-some percent are saying, hey, we want to clean up the environment but at the same time we want to keep the economy moving and we want gasoline at a price we can afford and natural gas at a price we can afford. And so seventy-some percent now say drill in America. They know. They see it.

And if our Congress doesn't do something about it, as you said, we're probably going to suffer the consequences. I will make a prediction. At that point, there will be a knee-jerk reaction and they will throw everything to the wind, say drill everywhere, do whatever it takes, but at that point, it is going to take a long time to catch up, and our economy could suffer tremendously.

I'd just like to make one more comment about the Persian Gulf. The Persian Gulf is a tinderbox right now. We don't know what Iran's going to do. If Iran develops a nuclear capability, there may be a major war over there because Israel is not going to want to be threatened like they are threatened, and we could end up seeing a couple of ships sunk in the Persian Gulf and see a large percentage of our energy stopped flat, stopped. And if that happens, we're not going to have the energy to keep this economy moving immediately, immediately, not to mention the problems that you were talking about a minute ago.

I'd like for you to explain to me, if it's okay with the gentleman who has the time, I'd like you to explain to me why the United States can't be completely energy independent. Because when I look at these statistics on the trillions of cubic feet of gas that's there and the billions of barrels of oil that's there, it seems to me that if we just dealt with our own resources, we could become almost energy independent.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Well, we're so far behind the curve right now, we were talking to Minerals and Mines Management today. Many of our rigs went to Russia to drill because there's so much more activity there. The big owners go where the action is, and they're being paid bonuses to go to North Africa to drill. We don't have as many rigs in the gulf. Thirty percent of our rigs are gone. Our infrastructure has dwindled because we've not opened up.

Now, the issue of can we be self-dependent, we would have to open up everything. It would take years to get the rigs here. We'd have to do coal-to-liquids, coal-to-gas. I mean, it would take a long time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I guess the point I was trying to make is I know it would take a long time because we are behind the curve, but if the United States got with the program like we should have back in the seventies, we could be almost energy independent right now.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Twenty percent of our grid is nuclear. We need 45 new plants by 2030 online to stay 20 percent of the grid, not grow. See, everything's shrinking. Hydro is becoming a smaller piece because we're not building dams. Everything's shrinking.

Nuclear stayed even because all of our nuclear plants today are producing beyond their design capacity. We have enhanced their ability to make energy. I mean, America on nuclear needs to get on to what France has been doing, the reprocessing and reuse the fuel we have instead of storing it, where we use it, and when you get down to the end, you have very little fuel.

But this country made a decision legislatively, we're not going to reprocess, we're not going to go down that road. So we've made a lot of bad decisions.

And I say, how did this happen? Eight years ago, natural gas was \$2; oil was \$10. The argument was, do we use theirs or do we use ours? Just 10 years ago. In fact, we hit that a couple times 6 or 7 years ago. We had some real cheap energy just for a few months there. We got so complacent.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I wish you would really stress that point and the gentleman from Georgia would stress that point that natural gas 10 years ago was \$2.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. \$1.80.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. And oil was how much?

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. \$10 a barrel. That's been most of our lifetime.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. And now it's 14 times that.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. That's right.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Unbelievable.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. To the point the gentleman makes, if we had started back in the seventies or the eighties or

the nineties, we'd be further down the road. I don't want my grandkids to say, "Pa Pa, why didn't you start it in 2008?"

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. That's right.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I don't want to have to answer that question to my grandkids.

If you will remember, this Congress in 1995 passed drilling in ANWR. President Clinton vetoed it. Today, we would be getting 1 million barrels of oil a day from ANWR.

The American people do not want us to stay here in the fetal position. They want us to act. And they don't want to hear the excuses that the majority is giving for us not taking action. We need to act, and some of the things that the gentleman has mentioned are so common sense.

I mean, we can drill as environmentally sensitive as anybody in this world. Our technology is the best. We've got the smartest and the brightest. We can do what France is doing with their nuclear waste. We can do what France is doing with their nuclear power. We can do what Brazil is doing with the coal-to-oil. We can do what Norway's doing with being environmentally sound drilling.

This is America. This is the place where we are the leaders of the world in so many things, and for some reason, we want to have our hat in our hand, going to even our enemies, begging them for them to increase their oil production, use their natural resources, because we are not willing to do it.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. America is a can-do Nation and we need a can-do Congress. And right now, the Congress, and both the House and the Senate, which is controlled by the other party, they have a we-can't-do, we can't do this, we can't do that. As a result, we're going to be short of energy, and the cost is going to go through the roof, and the cost of gasoline per gallon is going to go up, I believe, even further.

What the American people I think need to do is call their Congressman and Senators and say, hey, we want a can-do attitude, start drilling, let's get energy independent.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. If the gentleman would yield, how did this happen? I know how it happened. I'm going to give you eight—and there's more than eight—eight organizations that are running this Congress when it comes to energy.

It starts out with the Sierra Club. You know what their Web page says? They're against oil shale development. We're not doing it. They're against coal liquefaction. We're not doing it. They're against offshore energy production. We're not doing it. They're winning.

Greenpeace: Phase out fossil fuels. We're trying to do it and we don't have a replacement. That's really what's going on. We've caused the world shortage.

Environmental Defense: Must eliminate power plant smokestacks, enemy number one.

League of Conservation Voters: Coal-to-liquid, wrong direction, can't do that. We're not doing it.

Defenders of Wilderness: Every coastal State is put in harm's way when oil rigs go up. That's offshore. They're opposed. And they're winning.

Natural Resources Defense Council: Coal mining is evil. And tell me coal isn't under attack. Coal is under attack. Close to 70 coal plants have been turned down by the States in the last 7 months.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. American jobs. We're losing American jobs.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. And those coal plants will all be natural gas plants which will further exacerbate the natural gas prices.

Center for Biological Diversity: Oil and gas drilling on public lands has devastating effects and must be stopped. They're winning.

Friends of the Earth: Liquid coal is dirty, costly, mustn't do it. They're winning.

These eight organizations are running this Congress.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. To the point that you're making, and I think that's what, Madam Speaker, the American people don't understand, the reason the majority is failing to act on our ability to drill in our own lands is that their base wants gas to be \$10 a gallon at the pump because they do not want us driving cars, and they want us to be dependent on them.

And so they are not doing anything. They are laying in that fetal position in a hunkered-down state because their base does not want this to come down. They don't want us to drill. They don't want us to use the shale-to-oil or coal-to-oil. They don't want us to use the clean coal technology that we have. They don't want us drilling for this natural gas.

And this is one of the things that we were just talking about. The gentleman from Pennsylvania mentioned these different organizations. If you receive something in your mailbox about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, you may get some pictures like this.

The reality of it is that is a real picture of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge right there. It's a tundra. It's a frozen tundra. It's what it is. I don't even see a tree on it.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I wish you'd hold that chart up again that shows how big the ANWR is. I think the American people are under the impression that the ANWR is a huge place. It's the size of—you said Reagan airport, I said Dulles, but airports are airports.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. This is the part that is talking about being explored for oil.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. The very small part of the yellow at the top is where ANWR is.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. That is the part that we know the billions of gallons of oil are under. That's the part.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. They have twice the amount of oil there that they have in Texas, and I just cannot understand why we're not drilling there.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. See, this is a picture of it. It's a frozen tundra.

It goes back to the fact that we are continually getting further and further behind. I think the American people, Madam Speaker, are at a point where they're saying we are wanting some action. And that's the reason we came up with the petition for Members of Congress to sign because we are the ones that can create the action. The American people can't create the action. It's our duty to create the action.

And so we started the petition, and this is a petition for just the Members, the elected Members of this body.

It says: American energy solutions for lower gas prices. Bring onshore oil online, bring deepwater oil online. And I guess we need to add natural gas to that, too, because that sounds like something we need to get on in a hurry. But also bring new refineries, bring new capabilities of refining this oil where we don't have to import 6.9 billion gallons of gas into this country a year.

And so what we did, we came up with a petition that's simple. This is not hard for anybody to understand, and you can't dance around it. It basically says: I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans. And we've got every Member, even the Delegates, a place to sign here. So far, out of the 435 Members, plus the Delegates, I don't know if that's seven delegates or whatever it is, we have 126 signatures. And so it's going good, and you can go to house.gov/westmoreland to find out if your Member of Congress has signed it or not.

We're trying to make this as simple as we can, to make us a responsive body, a body of action, rather than just laying here saying "we can't" to "we can."

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And I think that the gentleman from Pennsylvania and the gentleman from Indiana have made terrific points here tonight, and I want to thank you all for coming.

We've got about 8 minutes, so I'll give you a couple minutes a piece to close, and then we'll wrap it up.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Well, let me take just 1 minute and say that this is a critical issue. The American people know it's a critical issue, but I don't think they know how critical it is or how critical it's going to be, the natural gas, the gasoline, the lack of energy, the lack of electricity, possibly, if we don't get this.

And so, you know, it is a critical time for us. And the American people really need to contact their Congressman and their Senators and let them know that they want to move towards energy independence by drilling here in the United States. We have the ability

to move toward energy independence. We have the ability to lower the price of gasoline. We have the ability to lower the price of energy that's going to be needed to heat our houses and our businesses this winter, but we're not doing it. And if we don't get with it, as both my colleagues have just said, we're going to reap the whirlwind. The economy is going to really suffer. It's not going to just be individuals, it's going to be the entire country.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. PETERSON.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Well, it's interesting, we have the talking points of the Democrats that they have 68 million acres under lease; there are—some are saying 5,500 leases, some are saying 10,000 leases: That's enough, they're not producing. I had one of them challenge me in a debate today that he wanted me to join on a bill with him to force the oil companies to drill where they are. Folks, if it's not productive, if they've drilled 10 dry holes, they're not going to drill any more. And in some of those deep water leases, it's 7 or 8 years before you get to productivity.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Let me just add one thing. Each one of those drilling sites, if they drill and they find oil, it costs up to \$2 billion to drill there. And if they're not going to make any money, they're sure not going to do that.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. They're drilling platforms, and it takes years to get there. So some of these are in process. A lot of them are old, tired leases where we're now drilling between wells. And the return, we're drilling three times as many wells as we used to and we're getting much less oil and gas because we're in old, tired fields.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Twelve percent lower production and an increase in drilling.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. That's right. We need to get out into the fertile fields where we'll drill less holes in the ground, but we'll get massive prime production where you get into a fertile field that's got great gas pressure and great oil pressure and we'll get huge volumes.

We've been deprived. In fact, on the Outer Continental Shelf, we're showing here, we've not even allowed seismographic in the last 35 years. We don't even have a modern measurement out there. We had old seismographic, what we're measured by; but new seismographic is like taking a black and white TV with a new modern flat screen TV. There's not much comparison, is there? No. Well, we've prevented that.

I mean, I guess what's scary is that while we're talking about this issue, you know what's going on in the Senate? They're talking about climate change. They just voted down, thank God. And Mr. MARKEY's committee here has a new climate change bill. If

we go down the carbon tax road, we're going to add another 20 or 30 percent to energy prices. Nobody disputes that. That's insanity. I mean, available affordable energy for America is the number one issue facing this country, and anybody who isn't for that doesn't get with the American people. They understand this.

Let me say this: If we don't deal with this issue in this Congress, the middle class in America will be destroyed. We don't have more years, we're years behind. The middle class in America will disappear because by the time they heat their homes and fuel their vehicles, they're not going to have money. I have a neighbor lady who makes \$300 and something a week. She pays \$175 a month annual gas bill to heat her home. She has two kids, \$100 a month to buy groceries. She said, if my gas bill doubles, I don't have any food money. She's going to have to get a second job and still try to raise two teen-age kids with a second job to pay. Folks, that's not what America is about. Last year, we had seniors in my district keep their houses at 58 degrees because they couldn't afford to keep them warm. That's not the America we should be providing.

If we don't deal with energy prices, the middle-class, blue-collar jobs are all going to disappear. The middle class is going to disappear. And we're going to have a country like so many other parts of the world where we have the rich and the poor. And the government is going to have to subsidize the poor because they can't afford energy.

It's a crisis in America. In fact, I think we're 4 or 5 years beyond when we should have started. I don't quite know how we catch up. Every day we delay, every month we delay, the American people are going to pay a bigger price. This is not the America my father gave me in my inheritance. I want to return our young people with hope, with affordable energy.

Eight years ago energy was cheap; it's never going to be cheap again. It's up to this Congress to do what's necessary and provide energy for America. And all those talking points that the Sierra Club have given the Democrats don't cut it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you. And let me just close with saying this: You're probably going to hear later on tonight that there are 68 million acres out there to drill on. Keep this in mind, Madam Speaker, we don't go to the hardware store to buy groceries. We're not going to drill on land that does not have resources under it. If you look at the Outer Continental Shelf and the lands that the Federal Government have inside this country, it is 2.5 billion acres of land. You're going to hear that the oil companies have these leases and they're not drilling them. It is law today that if a company that leases land does not honor that lease agreement, that lease is taken away from them.

These arguments will not hold water. It is time to act, and the time is now.

It is time that this Congress turns into a Congress of action that wants to move forward—our being less dependent on foreign oil—and quit relying on our enemies in an unstable region to produce our oil, to produce our energy.

So I want to thank the two gentlemen for joining me tonight. I hope you will go to house.gov/westmoreland and see the people that have signed up and believe in the fact that we need to increase U.S. oil production to lower the gas prices for all Americans.

And Mr. PETERSON, you can close.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. If the Democrats win this debate and we don't produce energy—if we use these old statements of 68 million acres and 80 something percent is leased, that is not factual; 2.5 percent of the Outer Continental Shelf is leased, the good spots are not leased—then we are giving the future of this country away.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And Madam Speaker, with that, I know you have enjoyed this, we yield back the balance of our time.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate having proceeded to reconsider the bill (H.R. 6124) "An Act to provide for the continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes", returned by the President of the United States with his objections, to the House of Representatives, in which it originated, and passed by the House of Representatives on reconsideration of the same, it was that the said bill pass, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity. I want to immediately yield to my friend. There were a lot of facts thrown out here, and the folks who are paying attention here in the Chamber may want to hear the response.

I yield to my friend from Pennsylvania.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I appreciate it.

We are going to continue to tell the story of gas prices, what we've just heard. And to keep on the message and to pick up where it was left off with the previous speakers, we're talking about the 68 million acres, here's the key point—a couple of key points: One is, there's 4.8 million barrels of oil per day every day that would be available underneath those 68 million acres. That's the number, 4.8 million barrels per day every day. And we'll talk later

about that in comparison to ANWR and other issues, but just to keep on the message. These are not 68 million acres that the Federal Government just said we're going to give you the deserts in Arizona and we're going to give you a bunch of areas that are not productive. These are 68 million acres that are currently leased to oil and gas companies.

Now, presumably the oil and gas companies would only choose to purchase a lease if there was some possibility that there was oil and gas underneath there. And as I've said, the estimated oil and gas—or oil, at least—that's under there is 4.8 million barrels per day. But that's the key point; these aren't just 68 million randomly chosen acres, these are 68 million acres that the oil and gas companies themselves chose to enter into a lease agreement so that they can drill for oil and gas. That's the key point. And they're not doing it.

As we talked about a few nights ago, there are a variety of reasons why they're not doing it. One of the reasons is that they're stockpiling these leases to put on their balance sheet, declare them as assets and raise up their profits and help their stock price. That's part of it. Part of it is that the geological work and the surveying and the construction takes a lot of time. And that's being done on some of these acres, 68 million acres. So we're going to get there, in some cases, but we're not there yet, which gets to what we're going to talk about later.

There really is a difference of opinion among the two groups that we are hearing tonight, but there is no difference of opinion that we have to do something about gas prices. Now, we're talking about long-term solutions. I would hope there's not going to be a difference of opinion on some of the short-term solutions. We're talking about the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, 70 billion barrels per day beginning 2 weeks from today. The manipulation that takes place in the market, the commodities market by these commodities traders, we're going to deal with that issue. There are short-term solutions.

But what is in this dispute tonight and what we're debating in a friendly way is the difference of opinion that we have about what we're going to be as a country 10 years from now and 20 years from now. Are we going to remain dependent on oil? And yes, we're talking in this case about domestic oil. About 65 percent of the oil we get in this country is from overseas. We import it from countries that do not have good will towards Americans in many cases.

So what happens if we drill in ANWR and the 20 percent that remains of the oil that's known in the Outer Continental Shelf where we're not allowed to drill? Eighty percent is already in areas where we are allowed to drill, so what happens if we allow and get to peak capacity 20 years from now? We might be down to 55 percent, we might be down to 52 percent. We're still going

to have a majority of our oil that we import from other countries. We're going to feed the beast for the next 20 years and we're going to be in the same place then as we are now.

So is that where we want to be? We have a decision to make as a Nation on how to spend the next 10 to 20 years. How do we want to use all the resources of this Nation and all the brain power of this Nation? Do we want to focus it on continuing our dependence on oil, or do we want to focus it on alternative sources of energy? We're going to talk about that, but I know the gentleman wants to continue along this track, so I will yield back to him.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And one of the issues that was brought up today by the President that we want to discuss—and I very much appreciate you making the presentation as to the other side of the debate that our friends made over the last hour. But a couple of the points that were made on the other side is that, well, if we go offshore, you go into the Outer Continental Shelf region, it's deep water, it's going to cost \$2 billion just to maybe get into the well. Well, when you look into the profits from 2007 for the oil companies, \$123 billion in profits last year. So the reason they give that they have to increase the price is because it is expensive to get into some of this deep water; no one is disputing that fact.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Can I talk about the \$2 billion figure?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Sure.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Because I don't want you to lose the train of thought on that one.

The \$2 billion figure includes the surveying and the geological work to actually find the oil in the first place, which it's not just drilling, the \$2 billion is from start to peak production.

The point of the 68 million acres is we already know there's oil there. We already know where it is. They purchased the lease specifically because there is oil known to be in those lands, and they're making a conscious decision not to drill there. So the \$2 billion actually supports our argument. It doesn't hurt our argument, it supports it, that there is work that needs to be done in any new lands that we make available that we've already done in the current 68 million acres that are available. That's what that \$2 billion does.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Much of this money has already been spent in the surveying and the geological work. So now you have, last year, \$123 billion in profits. That's what you get the money for because you say it's expensive to get in there. So you're making all the profits and not necessarily going in to get the oil.

And then another comment earlier was made, well, it may take 7 years. Well, if you go to ANWR, you're not going to get a drop out for 10 years. And in 20 years—and I love how this ANWR has just become the silver bullet. If you go into ANWR today, or