

have the President's former press secretary talking about what really happened:

"We're going to be able to use the oil for reconstruction."

"We're going to be greeted as liberators."

"We had nothing to do with outing a CIA agent."

"If we just keep cutting taxes for rich people, the middle class will at some point benefit, and we will stimulate the whole economy."

"The tax cuts lead to more revenue."

Is that why we borrowed \$3 trillion over the last 3 years?

And now it's if we just drill more, we're going to reduce the cost of gas, which is not the case. Or if we just drill in ANWR, we're going to significantly reduce the cost of gas. Then it was in the last week or two, China's right off the coast of Cuba stealing it from us. We should be there. Not true.

All of these have not been true, and now the same gentlemen who provided all of those arguments and used the bully pulpit to provide all those arguments are now saying, let's just keep going down the wrong road.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Well, that's it. I think the gentleman hit the nail on the head. I don't know what more we could add on this issue.

Could I inquire to the Chair how much time we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SPACE). The gentleman has 8 minutes.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Well, if we could talk for a minute about the GI Bill, as the gentleman mentioned, there is no group that should stand ahead of our Nation's veterans when it comes time to making policy decisions, plain and simple. I think most people in this Chamber would agree with that.

So what has this Congress done recently to help our Nation's veterans? Well, last year we had the largest increase in the 77-year history of the VA, health system funding increase. We have increased screening and treatment of traumatic brain injuries at every VA health care facility.

We have extended family and medical leave to cover our military Guard and Reserve. We have covered small business entrepreneurship opportunities for returning veterans. We have increased the capital and the grants and loans that are available to small business owners who served, themselves, in the Guard and Reserve. We have a tremendous record of achievement on veterans in this Congress.

What we are taking up this week, probably, is the GI Bill. As the gentleman said, the GI Bill has not been updated since 1944 and not modernized.

□ 2030

So we are talking about more than 60 years since the GI bill has been modernized. This Congress took a step to say if you serve in the military for 3 or more years since September 11, you will qualify for the new GI bill which

says you will be allowed to attend a State institution, State university in your State and we will pay for it because we want to thank you for what you have done for this country. You have earned that benefit. We can never thank you enough for putting your life on the line and the sacrifice that you have made and that your family made. So we are going to offer you something in the long run that will benefit all of us, educating people.

There is a continuing benefit to society of educating our veterans and giving them a step up so they can get out into society and continue their own careers, which helps everybody. And so we took that step in this Congress of modernizing the GI bill because it had been less than \$10,000 that were available under the current GI bill.

I think anyone who has kids who are going to college or had to pay for their college themselves realizes \$10,000 in today's world doesn't get you very far with regard to higher education.

We not only pay for the tuition at the State university rate in the State where the veteran lives, we also have a stipend for housing costs and ancillary things like books. We will not pay for everything, but we will help. And certainly the veterans who have earned that benefit deserve every penny of that, and I am sure the gentleman agrees.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Absolutely. One of the issues is we have in this country only 300 million people. We are now competing in a globalized economy with China and India and a variety of other rising economic countries. So we have to make a point that all of our 300 million citizens, a major disadvantage in human capital, are educated.

You've probably had a similar experience as I have had dealing with interns and staff members and people you have met back in the district. The benefits that a soldier brings to your organization, because of the discipline, the focus and the organizational skills, the ability to deal with situations that are very challenging, and you add to that a college degree or a master's degree or a Ph.D. or a law degree, you are talking about someone who is prepared to really contribute value to whatever organization they are joining, whether it is government or business. There can't be a better investment to make.

And why is it that we have enough wherewithal to borrow the money for the \$12 billion a month, but when these soldiers come back, the President says I'm going to veto that bill. We don't have the money for that bill.

I think of all of the issues that you mentioned earlier, it is important for us to recognize that last year under a Democratic Congress, led by Speaker PELOSI and HARRY REID, we made the largest increase for veterans' benefits in the 77-year history of the VA because as Democrats, we are committed to the soldiers. Whether you are on one side of the war issue or another, we all say we are behind the soldier. And

when the soldier comes home, you will have the health care and the benefits you deserve. And we want to add onto that this GI bill. So we have made that commitment and will continue to push for that commitment for this GI bill so we can reward the soldiers. It is important for us to deal with this issue.

All of these posters with all of the information can be found on the Speaker's Website, the 30-Something Website that we have. You will be able to find, you will be able to get all of these. All of these are available for Members to look at and analyze and to get a visual of what we have been talking about over the last few minutes.

Mr. ALTMIRE. We will close it out now, and we want to thank the Speaker for the opportunity to address the Chamber tonight.

Any of the charts that we have talked about, and I really would encourage Members to take a look at them, can be found on [www.speaker.gov/30somethings](http://www.speaker.gov/30somethings).

#### TRAGEDY IN IOWA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, as always, it is a profound privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States Congress.

I come here to the floor, and first I can't begin this discussion over the next 60 minutes without first taking up the issue of the natural disaster tragedies in Iowa. From my history and experience, I go back a ways working with the natural environment and the natural disasters we have had. I remember a tragic tornado at Belmond, I lived through the 1993 floods, and when my equipment and my livelihood was under water, I went to eastern Iowa and down to Keokuk to help out down there because it was the only thing I could do to improve the situation because mine was not in a condition where it could be helped, at least for a few days.

As I lived through those experiences and as the Katrina hurricane came up and in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew, for example, I was one of the first Members of Congress to arrive down in New Orleans. I made multiple trips down there into the heart of it. I have something like 3,600 pictures taken of Hurricane Katrina's aftermath when New Orleans was full of water. I have been on the ground and in the air, and I have slept on the Red Cross cot and I looked the people in the eye who were underwater and still suffer from that tragedy. I am not without experience.

Personally, I lost a considerable amount in the floods of 1993; but also I have the experience as a Member of Congress who has gone into these disastrous areas in the world. And Hurricane Katrina being the heart and the worst of it.

And yet when I look at Iowa today, and just having come back from the location last Friday morning where I visited where our four Boy Scouts were killed by a tornado and 48 others were injured, they rose up and did everything that they could do. They did everything they could do from a training perspective, and they did everything that they could to prepare. They did everything they could to take shelter with the shelter that they had that was available. And in the aftermath of that disastrous tornado that brought about the four fatalities of the Boy Scouts, they conducted themselves with utter heroism.

I stood on the site and listened to the stories from a number of the people on the location. And think of this, Mr. Speaker, 1,800 acres in the loess hills of Iowa, a very remote wilderness Boy Scout camp location that has been used for a number of years as a training location for first aid, first responders, and survival where the Boy Scouts have been trained.

And the tragedy of this is that the Boy Scouts are generally some of the first ones to arrive to help sandbag and help prepare for a flood or a disaster. They are some of the first ones to be there and stay there and help clean up in the aftermath. They are some of the first ones to arrive in the aftermath of a tornado or another natural disaster to help clean up, and they are leaders in their own right as youth, and they are also leaders in training for their adulthood. And these were the elite of the elite. These were the stand-out Boy Scouts who were there. There were at least 93 at the location on the night of the tornado.

The shelter that they had available to them was small, round little pup tents that were pitched up the finger valleys of what we call the bluffs. It's the loess hills of Iowa. Some of the reporters called it mountains, and I think I am flattered by that. Come see the mountains in western Iowa. They are beautiful. They are about 300 feet high, but they look like mountains on the horizon.

When the storm came, the Scouts had a very short window of notice and warning. The visibility lookout across the horizon didn't exist for them because they were in the valley and the tornado that came first set down on the ranger home, and destroyed that home. There was no basement, no shelter for the wind, slab on grade with a large fireplace built into which the tornado knocked down on top of the ranger and his family. They were trapped underneath the rubble. It was three small children, wife and husband, so five of them were trapped under the rubble of cement blocks and stone that was the former fireplace that collapsed on them.

And the tornado went from there up the valley and kind of jumped around the finger a little bit and set right in on the shelter house that 40 or 50 Scouts had gone to as quickly as they

could when the weather got bad. The tornado picked up a pickup truck and blasted it through the chimney and the fireplace and on through the building, and it landed on the other side. The vehicle was about 100 feet on the one side of the building which I think was south and it landed about 150 feet on the other side of the building. That knocked rubble down on top of the Scouts, and that is where the fatalities took place. And that is where most of the injured of the 48 who were injured out of the roughly 93, and that were taken off for medical care.

The Scouts came out of that rubble. Some of them went immediately to the aid of those who were hurt the worst and did the triage that their training had taught. Some ran half a mile to the ranger's house where they could hear the children screaming from underneath the rubble, and pulled that rubble and saved them from suffocation that ultimately would have taken place. The ranger and his wife and children did walk away, although a couple were severely injured. It was a very sad situation with a very heroic reaction.

Some of the Scouts then reached to help each other. Some of them went to the first aid kits that they had been issued 2 years and 2 months earlier when they were on the same location and there was a surprise drill that was called by and initiated by the Boy Scout leaders and by the EMT workers from the neighborhood. They joined together at 5 in the morning and they converged on the 1,800 acre Scout camp and simulated a disaster that very much was like the real disaster that came 2 years and 2 months later.

The Scouts had their training. They were trained to react quickly. Many of them did. Some of them ran up the hill to a storage shed where they went in and got a couple of all-terrain vehicles and chain saws, and came back down the hill and began sawing the trees out of the way so emergency vehicles could get in. Other Scouts performed first aid with the kits they had been issued 2 years and 2 months earlier. They were saving lives all across that area.

The bottom line of it, Mr. Speaker, that the Scouts and their Scoutmasters and the EMTs that converged on the area within 7 minutes, and I would submit that is within 7 minutes even though the nearest town is at least 7 miles away, they saved Lord knows how many lives. But each move they made before the tornado hit and each move that they made after that was as good as it could have been. Sometimes it's just not enough. Sometimes even though everybody does everything right, there still will be loss of life. And four Scouts were called home who will be remembered for all time, especially on that location.

I can't say enough about the job that they did, their training and the EMTs in the neighborhood, all of the emergency responders, the law enforcement personnel, the fire departments, the urban teams across the State, everyone

that converged on that location began to arrive 7 minutes after the tornado hit. The Scouts were already sawing logs and timber off the pathways so emergency vehicles could go up. Within 2 hours, everyone who was injured and needed medical care was off the site and under medical care at some of the local medical facilities and hospital. Some went to Omaha, and some went to Sioux City. But the largest share went to Burgess Memorial Hospital in Ottumwa. And those that arrived there, I can just sense the tone in the voice of the medical workers there. The thing that they had trained for, one of the things they had feared and trained for all their lives had visited them on that evening last week.

They mustered through the cause and provided the best quality medical care possible and took care of the patients, the 20 patients out of the 48 that arrived at Burgess Memorial in Ottumwa, and also Mercy Hospital in Sioux City and down into Council Bluffs and Omaha. Everyone stepped up to the task. I think they can be very proud of the way that they reacted to a tragedy, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2045

And it is a tragedy that will be remembered in Boy Scout lore for all time. If there is a silver lining behind this cloud, the silver lining is that the training that they had, the *deja vu* experience that was visited upon them last week was one that had a maximum amount of training available. And one of the Scouts said, I think, the most heroic thing when he said, if this had to happen anywhere, it was a good thing that it happened here where we were trained to deal with it. That's a courageous statement, Mr. Speaker. And I can't attribute that because I don't actually know the name of the Scout, but all the Scouts out there, I think, expressed the same sentiment. And I'm proud of the work that they have done. I congratulate them. My heart, thoughts and prayers goes out to them, to their families as they grieve for the lost ones. And as they put this back together, all of us will join together in that part of this recovery from the disaster, as bad as it is. I'll certainly be supportive of constructing a memorial on the location where we lost the four Scouts.

Fortunately, the ranger and his family all came out of it in at least reasonably good health and are in the recovery mode today.

But I look across the State, Mr. Speaker, and it's a tough battle all the way across Iowa. And we've had more loss of life due to weather and natural disasters than ever in my memory. I believe that number now, through the course of this, comes to 20 lives that have been lost in the culmination of the tornados, the one especially that hit Parkersburg, the one that hit in Monona County that took the lives of the four Boy Scouts.

If you add to a number of other disasters, weather-related, that have come

across the State, and look at the State of Iowa in your mind's eye, Mr. Speaker, we're fortunate in western Iowa that we're not in worse condition than we are. The Missouri River and its tributaries, by the nature of their grade, come up fast when it rains and they go down fast. We've had some severe flooding in western Iowa, but it doesn't sustain itself over the days and weeks in the same fashion that it does in eastern Iowa.

Des Moines, central Iowa, downstream from the Saylorville Reservoir and downstream from the Raccoon River, they've had some record flooding in that area; not as bad as it was in 1993, in some locations actually worse. But for the breadth of it, not as bad it was in 1993, which was a 500-year flood event.

But over as far as one goes east in Iowa, and especially in Congressman LOEBSACK's district, Cedar Rapids and in the Waterloo, Cedar Falls and Iowa City area, the Cedar River especially, but for the Iowa River, the all-time high was set, I'm not certain of the year, but in this flood, this new 500-year event that came back to visit us 15 years after the last 500-year event, Mr. Speaker, set an all-time high there near Iowa City or near the Iowa River that was 3½ feet higher in its crest of the water flow elevation than ever before. 3½ feet higher, Mr. Speaker. And that eclipsed a 500-year event in order to do that.

But in Cedar Rapids it was more difficult. It was 11½ feet above the previous high water mark. 11½ feet, Mr. Speaker. That is a huge, huge amount, a wall of water that has inundated the Cedar Rapids area.

And I will say that we've been through some floods before. And we're watching as this crest has moved its way down the Mississippi River. And the Mississippi River is pushing at some all-time highs, and marginally has eclipsed those all-time highs.

But what we've learned, in 1993 we rebuilt some levees. We built some up. We tried to prepare ourselves, mitigation for future floods, and it wasn't enough, especially in the Cedar Rapids area. It wasn't enough in the Iowa City area. It wasn't enough in some of the smaller town areas and some of the other tributaries, as well as the Cedar River and the Iowa River.

But I want to compliment the Iowans in the eastern part of the State as well, because they did everything they could to get ready. And during this crest and the aftermath, I have every confidence that they have done and will do everything necessary to clean up from it and to bring the resources that are available to them to bear, to pump the water out, to let gravity feed it down, to clean up the muck and the silt, and to go into the buildings and take out the drywall, and haul out the appliances that have been flooded out and redo the flooring, redo the walls, rebuild.

In some places houses are entirely gone, washed away, Mr. Speaker,

washed away and crushed into bridges where they were trapped until they could be pushed further downstream. Some people's homes just simply washed away.

We've seen this kind of tragedy across the country time and again, and I alluded earlier to my experience at Katrina. And this experience in Katrina, compared to Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, all of Iowa, tells me that the vast areas of New Orleans, some of those that are not rebuilt yet may not be rebuilt, even after we're finished rebuilding in Iowa.

But I call upon Iowans, and I have every expectation and all confidence that they'll step forward and get this work done, and they'll do it with volunteer forces. They'll do it with contract forces, and we will do it together by using the resources that are available to us in the most responsible fashion.

And we do need help, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how much this flood has cost. I know that we appropriated tens of billions of dollars to New Orleans and Katrina, and I have been one of the critics of how that money was spent in some cases, in fact, some will say in many cases, and they may well be right.

I pledge, Mr. Speaker, that I'll also be looking to Iowa and asking and making sure that the utilization of the resources that are available to Iowans to recover from this disaster are used with every bit of the frugality and responsibility, as if every dime was our own money reinvested into the future. And I will spend my time overseeing this.

I will defend the interests of the taxpayer, and I will protect the needs of Iowans to have a chance to recover from this.

The cost of these disasters are far greater than we can withstand within the State itself. To give an example, we're looking at an initial component of this of perhaps \$2 billion. It will go beyond that, we think. And there's not much to quantify it. This is a guess number, Mr. Speaker.

But to put it in perspective, the Iowa budget's around \$6 billion. It was 5 when I was in the Iowa Senate. It's probably above \$6 billion now. And so it gives you a sense that this disaster is significantly greater than at least a third of the Iowa budget, at least a third of Iowa's budget, and perhaps well more than half of it, maybe even more than a year or two of the Iowa budget. We will have to see.

But I'm going to ask that Iowans use these resources that we provide here in Congress in the most responsible fashion, and step up and do what they do.

We don't have a problem with looters. We only have a problem with how we organize all the volunteers that show up. That's the right kind of problem to have. That's the proudest kind of problem to have.

And I'm looking forward to an opportunity to roll up my sleeves and get

into the middle of this, because when you get into a situation like this, Mr. Speaker, the thing that makes me feel the best is if I can just do something, if I can put my hands on some work and just get in there and do something to help everyone else. That's what I think is the sentiment from the Iowa congressional delegation.

We stood here on the floor tonight, and Congressman BOSWELL asked for a moment of silence from this Congress. I appreciate the leadership on that, and I appreciate that we're all here together in it. We will stand together.

And so I thank all the support that's here, Mr. Speaker, and we will be doing our share of this work confidently. We appreciate all the thoughts and prayers and the efforts and the support that have come, that will be there.

And now, Mr. Speaker, I must transition into this issue that is a big and broad and lasting issue for the United States of America, and that's the issue that's been discussed by the previous speakers in the 30 Something group. I will give them credit. They come to this floor regularly, consistently, and have done so for years, and they've made arguments that I've consistently and regularly disagreed with for years, Mr. Speaker.

I first take issue with the gentleman from Ohio's statement that drilling for oil is a dead end.

Now, only here on the special orders, in the rather silent nights after the general session of Congress has wrapped up, can you get by with a statement that drilling for oil is a dead end. How can that be a dead end?

We drilled for oil all over the Middle East. The Hunt Brothers went to Libya and developed the oil fields there. They were nationalized by Qaddafi when he took power in Libya, however many decades ago that's been. It's been a while. Drilling for oil in the Middle East wasn't a dead end.

Drilling for oil in Venezuela hasn't been a dead end. Hugo Chavez is getting rich off the oil they've drilled for in Venezuela.

Drilling for oil in Russia hasn't been a dead end. They're exporting oil into Europe and other parts of the world, and their cash flow is looking pretty good right now.

Drilling for oil in Canada hasn't been a dead end. They've discovered a massive amount of oil supply in Northern Alberta called the tar sands or the oil sands, depending on how you want to label that, Mr. Speaker. The Canadians are happy that they've drilled for oil, and they will be soon exporting tar sands oil down to the United States.

And Union County in South Dakota, the Elk Point region just across the river from Sioux City, Iowa, passed a resolution here within the Primary Day, the first Tuesday after the first Monday in June, that endorsed the idea of building a new oil refinery, first one since 1975 in the United States. Who would have thought that it would be, Mr. Speaker, in South Dakota?

But in South Dakota it's most likely to be. The highest hurdle has been reached. There may well be other regulations that have to be circumvented or resolved. But in the end, it's most likely now there will be a new refinery at Elk Point, South Dakota; a new refinery with billions of dollars invested in it that will have a pipeline coming down from Northern Alberta with the tar sands oil in it, oil sands oil. They will be refining that crude oil into gas, diesel fuel, engine oil and all the other products that come out of that refinery, setting up pipelines and distributing that oil across the country.

Drilling for oil wasn't a dead end and is not a dead end in Canada. And, in fact, if you'd asked the people in States like Texas, Oklahoma, California, Long Beach area, for example, Pennsylvania, drilling for oil was not a dead end in Pennsylvania whatever year that was when it was discovered some time I think previous to the first half of the 19th century.

And drilling for oil in the north slope, Mr. Speaker, was not a dead end. We went up there in 1970 to drill for oil and build a pipeline from the north slope of Alaska down to the Port Valdez. The right-of-way was 600 miles from Fairbanks north. And the environmentalists went in with a court injunction and blocked the development of the oil fields and the pipeline on the north slope of Alaska. That happened in 1970. But, in 1972, they had made their way through the quagmire of the environmentalist lawsuits, resolved all of that, opened up the oil fields in the north slope of Alaska and the pipeline, built the pipeline and opened the oil fields. And by 1975, we're pumping oil down to the Port Valdez.

Now, today, we're hearing: It's a dead end to drill for oil in ANWR, a dead end to drill for oil in the Outer Continental Shelf, a dead end to drill for oil on the non-national park public lands of the United States of America. Drilling for oil, Mr. Speaker, is a dead end.

Where are you going to get your gas from? I didn't hear you advocate that you want to come to Iowa and buy up all the ethanol that we're producing, so I don't know what you're going to put in your gas tanks, gentlemen. Your cars have to run on something unless, of course, it's your proposal that you're going to park them. And I can understand why you'd want to do that if you represent an inner city urban area that has access to publicly funded and subsidized mass transit.

In fact, when I look at the 18.4 cents a gallon that is a Federal gas tax that each of us pay when we fill up our tanks, we stick the nozzle in and we squeeze the handle, and when a gallon runs out we know we're paying 18.4 cents in Federal tax money on gas.

And a lot of us spend 20 or more cents to the State as well for our gas tax. We're willing to do that because it's a user fee, Mr. Speaker, and we're willing to do that because the consumers believe that 100 percent of that money

goes to build and maintain our roads. Users fees, drive on a road, you wear it out. You need a new road, you've got to build a new one. You need to rebuild the roads that you're driving on because the surfaces wear down and the grade undermines, and you need to reshoulder and you need to reshape and you need to upgrade. 18.4 Federal cents per gallon goes to that. 20-some State cents in many States go to do that.

But the consumers aren't thinking that 17 percent of that Federal tax dollar goes to subsidize the mass transit of the constituents of the people that come down here on this floor and say: Drilling for oil is a dead end. We don't need any more gas in this marketplace, at least we don't need any more American-produced gas in this marketplace. No, uh-uh. Somehow there is a solution by demagoguing the oil companies.

Well, did they think, Mr. Speaker, that if 15 percent of the gas that's consumed in the United States, the gas that's delivered in the world—put it that way—comes from private companies like Exxon, Chevron, Texaco, and the balance of that comes from nations that own the oil industry, nationalized oil industry, and so what point is it in not demonizing the countries that are part of the OPEC, the oil cartel, but demonizing the private companies that are putting more and more product on the marketplace, helping to keep the price of gas down?

What sense does it make, Mr. Speaker, for the Speaker of the House and other leadership and committee Chairs to argue that we should bring windfall profits taxes against the oil-producing companies when their return on investment is less than 10 percent, down towards 8 percent?

Why is it, if Exxon is returning 8 percent on their capital investment, why would we want to say to them, that of all of the trillions or, excuse me, all of the billions of dollars that you have invested, you ought not be able to make 10 billion a quarter? With your capital investment being what it is, what is an inappropriate return on investment?

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Would you want to bring all of the companies down here? How about just the Fortune 500 companies that got a greater return on the investment, Mr. Speaker, than Exxon in particular. Chevron is another. Why don't we bring a bill under that same logic, the logic of the Speaker from San Francisco, that we should put a windfall profit tax on any Fortune 500 company that makes more than 8 percent return on their investment of their capital. Now, that would be a consistent logic. It would be illogical, but it would be consistent with the logic of the Speaker.

It's not the case. These oil companies are helping us keep our prices down. I don't know if they're gouging or not. But if you think they are, get in the business and produce some energy.

But let's point our finger over at the countries that have nationalized the

oil. Khadafi in Libya has nationalized the oil on the Hunt brothers. They're setting prices. They're together. They're a cartel. And by the way, you cannot legislate against that. You have got to find competition that competes directly against it.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know where to go in the world with the global demand on energy the way it is that we can line up with a country or two or five or ten and say, Why don't you just sell all of your oil to the United States? This is a global market. This is a global marketplace that has driven the oil price up to \$139 a barrel and the price of gas up to \$4.08 a gallon, average regular retail in America, \$4.08.

Mr. Speaker, I made the statement some time back a year or more ago. So what is the solution for \$3 gas? And my answer was, Well, \$3 gas. Surely if gas is \$3, the people that are blocking the development of energy here in the United States are going to get out of the way and join with those of us that believe that energy should be cheaper, not higher.

But what do they do? Mr. Speaker, they come to the floor and they make statements like, Drilling for oil is a dead-end. Now who in America would buy a line like that? "Drilling for oil is a dead-end." Drilling for oil has produced all of the gas that we're burning in America. It's produced all of the gas that's being burned globally. It's produced all of the diesel fuel that's being burned in the United States and globally, and it's producing all the hydraulic oil and all of the other hydrocarbons that are out there into the marketplace.

Drilling for oil is not a dead-end. Drilling for oil is what launched the industrial revolution, lifted us into this modern era, and allows us to travel globally and do business and see the world. It's an entirely different place than it was when we were sitting on the back of a horse or walking behind the tail of one, Mr. Speaker.

And by the way, the Earth was a very dirty place back then. Let's just say 108 years ago at the turn of the previous century back when it was horses doing this instead of the internal combustion engine, you know, things fall out from underneath the tail of a horse and they pollute the street. And they walked in the mud, and the garbage got dumped out of the windows, and we didn't know a lot about medicine or water quality or air quality. We burned a lot of coal, and we burned a lot of wood, and the air wasn't very clean, and the water wasn't very clean. And we didn't have very much for sewers, if they existed at all. We didn't have a lot for modern health care.

We lived in the squalor of animals and people walking through their own waste and refuse. And somehow, they thought the Earth was in the balance back in those days, Mr. Speaker. And I will submit that the Earth is much closer to being in the balance today. The technology has moved us forward,

the internal combustion engine and the development of oil supplies globally and cheap oil and cheap gas and diesel fuel globally has lifted us out of that mucky quagmire of animal and human waste stirred up in the streets of America and around the world, put us up on paving and moves us across the highway at 75 miles an hour in some of the States on the interstate and allows us to get in a jet plane, and the Speaker herself to fly from Washington nonstop all the way over to her digs over there in San Francisco any weekend she chooses, every weekend she chooses because what? Because companies like Exxon, Chevron, American companies went out there and drilled for oil and explored for it in the United States, offshore in the United States, offshore around the world, places in deep water. They developed technology, and they brought this oil to the market.

And if we say to them a deal is not a deal, we want to go after your profits because we think the number's big, even though it's a smaller percentage of the return on the investment, if I'm on that board of directors, I have to think maybe we should not be investing the capital of our stockholders and more and more energy and more and more oil because the Congress will take our profits away from us. A deal is not a deal with this leadership, Mr. Speaker. And I would expect oil companies, if this persists, to invest some of their capital some place out of the reach of the deal changers, those that don't keep their word that are leading some of the issues here in this Congress.

I also would take us to an issue that has popped up in the news in the last today and in previous days about an effort on the part of some of the Democrat Members of Congress that believe that we should nationalize the oil industry in the United States of America.

I mentioned earlier that Khadafi nationalized the oil industry in Libya. He took over the oil fields that were delivered by the Hunt brothers and others. He took over the facilities they had developed and confiscated their capital. And that is also what happened in Venezuela when Hugo Chavez took over.

Well, there's some fellow travelers here in the United States. Congress, Mr. Speaker, fellow travelers with the people that have nationalized the privately owned oil industries developed within their countries, fellow travelers that agree and believe in that. And not necessarily submitting who the traveler is, I will just say this: That gentlelady from California, Ms. WATERS, advocated that we should nationalize our oil industry.

Now, she is not a lightweight in this Congress, Mr. Speaker. I know her well. I have served on the Judiciary Committee with her for 5½ years. Here is what she said. She said this at a subcommittee hearing with the oil industry present, and to them she said, This liberal will be all about socializing, would be about basically taking over

and the government running all of your companies.

Mr. Speaker, an allegation and announcement of a position to nationalize the oil companies in the United States. Take them over by the United States government? That is not just socializing them, as Ms. WATERS said, that is—that's Communism, that's Marxism, that's confiscation of real property in the United States of America that's protected by the United States Constitution.

And, not to be outdone, Mr. HINCHEY made the statement in a similar period of time that he would be for nationalizing the refineries in the United States.

Now, I would like to think that we're a long, long ways from being so desperate that we can't drill for oil as Mr. RYAN says. He says it's a dead-end. Drilling for oil is a dead-end, Mr. RYAN. But if there's any oil coming out of those wells—and I would yield to anybody that wanted to challenge my statement—if there's any oil coming out of those wells, then this Congress, according to Ms. WATERS and Mr. HINCHEY and who knows how many others, would want to nationalize those oil wells, those oil fields, that real property that's held by the shareholders, the retirement funds, the pension funds of the workers and the union people in the United States, nationalize that, and the government's going to run it? How good? As good as we run Social Security? As good as we run health care? As good as we run the welfare program here in the United States? Confiscate real property? Kick aside the Constitution?

Maybe if you're not enthusiastic enough about that as a Member of the other side of the aisle, you might want to go with Mr. HINCHEY and let the oil companies own their oil wells but nationalize the refineries.

Mr. Speaker, that is a chilling message that does affect our markets and does not make energy cheaper. It makes it more expensive. Nationalize our oil industry, Ms. WATERS, Mr. HINCHEY, and who knows how many others.

The statements made by my predecessors here in the special orders about drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf towards Cuba. I listened to those statements as they were made, and I actually wrote down, What is your point. What is your point in bringing up the issue as to whether the Chinese are or aren't drilling offshore and does anybody have any information about whether there is an agreement?

We know that the Chinese have their industry and their technology in China. I, Mr. Speaker, have seen it. I have seen the capital investment. I have seen the development. I do not know if there is a signed agreement, a handshake with Castro, or if there is activity down there. I haven't gone down there to look. I haven't flown over the area. In fact, I would be a little bit concerned about doing so because it might well bring out some opposition.

But my question is, What is your point? Are they, Mr. RYAN, Mr. ALTMIRE, the balance of you that have been standing here on the floor making these statements about drilling for oil is a dead-end, I guess then I can take it that you make your criticism about maybe China's not drilling offshore in Cuba. Maybe they are. I don't think we know. But are you for or are you against drilling the Outer Continental Shelf? Whether or not the Chinese are drilling there may not be material. But I believe that we ought to be there.

We ought to go halfway to Cuba, and we ought to punch in a wall of wells all the way along there, if there's any oil there, we ought to punch those wells in. We ought to get the oil. We ought to take the natural gas. And we ought to drill our way back coming back towards Florida.

And it makes no sense to set aside the Outer Continental Shelf towards any of these States and even say to the states, Well, it's your resource. Let us know if you want to drill there and maybe Congress will react towards that or the President will and someone will come and punch a hole in there and bring some gas or oil up below the ocean's floor.

When Ronald Reagan claimed 200 miles out in the Outer Continental Shelf, he claimed that for the United States of America, Mr. Speaker. He didn't claim it for Florida or California or Louisiana or Virginia or New York or Massachusetts or Maine. He claimed it for the United States of America. Three miles offshore? That's State ground. That's fine. I will concede that point. But from 190 from—3 miles to 200 miles, 197 miles, that's all resources of the American people.

We have to defend those shores with our military. We have to guard our ports. We're doing that federally. The States do not have a claim to the resources offshore. And if they object outside of three miles, I'm wondering what their objection will be. But I bet it will not be to seeing \$2 gas again. I bet it won't be to maybe seeing \$1.70 gas again or maybe even less.

So maybe, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of solutions. There are a lot of solutions that are there. I agree that this should not be—I agree with Mr. ALTMIRE this should not be a game of "gotcha," but I fear it is a game of "gotcha" because I sit here and listen to this, and for the 5½ years that I have been here, it's been a constant mantra of running against George Bush.

I just left the President where he's giving a speech uptown, Mr. Speaker, and he will be retired January 20 of this upcoming year. I stand with the President on these energy issues. I stand with the President on the Middle Eastern issues. And at some point, the 30-Something group, the Democrats, the liberals, the progressives, the socialists, the Marxists, and the Communists are all going to have to figure out that George Bush is not running

for reelection. He actually said tonight that he will be retiring and going back to Crawford, Texas. Maybe watching the Rangers on TV. And I salute him for his service to America.

But you're going to have to find a different person to demonize, 30-Something group, and you are going to run against the new agenda that's coming.

And you're standing here on this floor tonight defending an untenable position, an untenable position that says drilling for oil is a dead-end. How can that be? Drilling for oil has opened up our economy, our industry, and has opened up the world to a modern era.

So, Mr. Speaker, I bring some things to the floor here that are quite interesting, I think. And this being the first demonstrable chart, take you back to 2001, January. President Bush was sworn in to office. Gas was \$1.49, Mr. Speaker. And as you can see the increase in gas prices throughout this period of time from 2001, the 6 years until 2007. Now, this was not adjusted for inflation, I would add. This is just dollars. So if you adjust this for inflation, this curve is going to look flatter than it is.

But if you see, this is a very flat curve, adjusted for inflation flatter yet. On the day that the gavel was passed in this 110th Congress to NANCY PELOSI, gas had gone from, by then, from \$1.49 in the Bush administration to \$2.33.

□ 2115

That was about when Speaker PELOSI said she's going to do something about gas prices, and I think she meant it actually because every bill that came to the floor of this Congress made energy more scarce, and you have to believe the law of supply and demand.

And so as each bill that came to the floor of Congress made the regulations more stiff, made it more difficult to go out and explore for more oil, discouraged the investors from research and development and oil exploration, piece by piece by piece, plus the threats, of course, and the tax increases that are flowing along the way and Chairman RANGEL's position that he never met a tax cut that he didn't want to kill—and to extend any of the Bush tax cuts, which were the salvation of our economy beginning May 28, 2003, was abhorrent to Mr. RANGEL. He didn't quite say so in his first interview or his second or his third, but after the reporters put together his answers and non-answers, throughout out a whole series of interviews across the media circle, the investors in America came to the conclusion that there would be no tax cut preserved at the end of the Rangel tenure.

And when that happened, you can see that conclusion. If you look at industrial investment, you can see that that investment tailed off sometime about mid-February right over here shortly after NANCY PELOSI took the gavel behind me, Mr. Speaker. That industrial investment tailed off because the cost

of capital went up. The cost of capital went up because the investors could see that there were going to be tax increases that were triggered in and kicked in along the way.

That has initiated a decline in this economy that's been significant. The decline in the economy, it started with less industrial investment, was followed by the sub-prime loan problem, was followed by the lack of consumer confidence, and by the way, coupled with a weaker dollar, a weaker dollar that has driven up also the cost of this energy. But here we are, gas is \$2.33 when NANCY PELOSI took the gavel, right where you're sitting, Mr. Speaker, and today average retail regular gas prices in America, \$4.08.

This short little period of time from 2007 until 2008, let's just say 17 months, maybe 18 months, gas has gone from \$2.33 to \$4.08. What do we get? What do we get but promises, and we get rhetoric on the floor that says drilling for oil is a dead-end. Well, I don't think it's a dead-end, and I don't think it's the whole solution, but I think we should drill ANWR. I believe we ought to drill the Outer Continental Shelf. I believe we should drill the non-national park public lands in America, and we ought to open up every logical place we can and put more energy on the marketplace.

There's no reason to save it underneath the crust of this earth when you are paying this kind of price, because we're transferring our wealth to the Middle East. We're transferring our wealth to companies that are not our friends. We transfer that wealth. They turn it into military power, they turn it into economic power, they turn it into political power, and they buy people off to become our enemies. They buy countries off to become our enemies. Our geopolitical influence is diminishing as our treasure is exported to foreign countries. That's just the oil I'm speaking of, Mr. Speaker.

We also have a deficit of trade that runs about a minus \$717 billion a year right now. That deficit has flattened out a little bit, but it still has a transfer of our treasure to other countries where we owe them debt, and this cannot go on in perpetuity. But the Pelosi energy plan is, well, let's take the \$2.33 gas—she promised she was going to take the prices down—let's get it up to \$4.08 and then send somebody to the floor like Mr. RYAN who says drilling for oil is a dead-end.

NANCY PELOSI, ask your constituents to believe that. Mine are not going to be so easily persuaded.

Now, drilling in ANWR, what does it look like? Here's a map, Mr. Speaker, of the United States of America. A lot of us have seen this map because it shows how big Alaska actually is. And I say this to needle my Texas friends. If we split Alaska in half, Texas would be the third largest State. Well, you can see by this map that comes close at least, if not true.

This little area up here in the northeast corner of Alaska, that's ANWR,

the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. And if you look a little further up here, this is the region that's in yellow that is the coastal plain that's in question.

Over here along this area about in there is Dead Horse. That's mile post zero of the Alaska pipeline. It's up there very near the Arctic Ocean. The Arctic Ocean runs right along here, Mr. Speaker, and the Dead Horse access, mile post zero, and then the pipeline runs across Alaska like this. I think it's here, maybe here. There, the oil goes onto tankers and is floated on down and around to refineries on the west coast of California and points beyond.

To deal with an issue that I continually am asked about, and it's been alleged on this floor that the allegation that this oil from the north slope of Alaska is shipped to Japan. Not true. It was true back in about 1985 for a short period of time because the economics worked out better that way, Mr. Speaker. Hasn't been true since then. Hasn't been true for at least 23 years.

This oil that comes out of the north slope of Alaska, pipeline down here and tankered on down, goes to the United States of America. In any case, that's what would happen with this oil that would be developed here on the north slope of Alaska.

Now, if you've seen an advertisement that says that we shouldn't drill in ANWR because it is a pristine, alpine forest, or they're showing you a picture of fine, evergreen trees and tell you let's not disturb the native area up there because it's pristine wilderness, I will submit, Mr. Speaker, that this area in question, the north slope and east of the north slope, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, is right on the Arctic Ocean.

I take us all back to something we all should have learned in eighth grade; that is, the Arctic Circle, which runs around here somewhere in Alaska, the Arctic Circle is the line, by definition, north of which trees can't grow. So why would we buy a negative commercial that tells us that we shouldn't be drilling in a pristine alpine forest? We can't go back to our eighth grade training and understand that this is an arctic coastal plain.

On its warmest days, with 24 hours of sunlight, it melts down towards the permafrost a foot to 18 inches. It has some tundra there. Tundra, by the way, can be reconstituted. We aren't going to tear it up. We would do this all on ice roads over the top. The ice melts and everything goes back to the natural way. But if a machine falls off of an ice road into the muck a foot to 18 inches down to the permafrost, gets pulled back out, can smooth that all over, the seed is there. In 5 to 6 years, the tundra is grown back. I've seen it, Mr. Speaker. It's not a belief that's not founded. It is one that I have observed.

I've also heard the testimony of the Native Americans that live up there that want to drill. Drill ANWR. Drill ANWR. Get the oil in the pipeline,



bring it down here, and bring it around to the refineries. This is not a pristine wilderness that can't be replaced, but it's not one that's going to be disturbed either.

This is a coastal, frozen tundra about 9 months out of the year or more that has a regular topography that's flat. It's got a few little potholes and sink holes in it. A little bit of green grass grows out of that tundra in the summertime. This works get done when it's all frozen.

There isn't even a native caribou herd there, Mr. Speaker. There is in the north slope. By the way, that herd was 7,000 in 1970, and it's over 28,000 head today because we did this work up in this area in an environmentally friendly fashion. And if it had not been done in an environmentally friendly fashion, if there had been a desecration of the environment, if there had been a significant spill, if there had been disrespect towards wildlife or loss of wildlife, I have every confidence that the people on this side of the aisle would have been here with their posters and their pictures, and they would have embellished it to no end because I don't believe that you believe that we should lower energy prices.

You've finally convinced me after 18 months, a year-and-a-half of this 110th Pelosi Congress, that you want to see energy prices go up, not down, but you believe that if you can drive gas prices up from \$2.33 a gallon to \$4.08 a gallon to \$5 a gallon to \$6 a gallon, maybe all the way up to where it is in Europe today at \$10 a gallon, the poor people will have to stop burning gas first. But a lot of people will stop burning gas or at least burn less of it, and they will get on their bicycles or walk or they will get on the mass transit that's subsidized by the people that are buying the gas, and there will be less combustion in the internal combustion engine, and there will be less emissions out the exhaust pipe. And less emissions out the exhaust pipe in your myopic mind saves the earth, saves the planet from what you believe is an impending global warming holocaust.

That's your motive. You would shut down, slow down dramatically, and ultimately shut down the economy of the United States of America, the very well-being of our people. The wealth that's created and regenerated here, that provides all of our creature comforts and our technology and our medicine and our creativity and our art and our sciences, that would all be diminished, all be shut down. You'd hand that all over to the Chinese and to India and to other developing nations and let them develop the industry. We would sit here and curl up among ourselves and spend our \$5, \$6, \$7, \$8, \$9, \$10 for gas, ride our bicycles and sit around and say, isn't it wonderful now. Drilling for oil was a dead-end, but we didn't drill. We didn't go into ANWR. We've got an awful lot of oil up there, enough oil up there to produce at least a million barrels a day for a good, long

time. We save that all back and handed our economy over to who? Handed it over to the Chinese, handed it over to India, handed it over to developing nations.

Mr. Speaker, a logical thinking nation cannot come to that conclusion, and I am quite concerned that we're not here building together a comprehensive energy plan and driving it with the leadership of the people who have been elected for our judgment and who have access to more information than anybody in the country collectively. We're not putting a plan together. We're reacting. We're scooting ahead of the hottest criticism there is, trying to hang on to some congressional seats but still move us off to the left and hand this country over to the people that believe in green, the people that are extreme environmentalists.

I'll point out, also, Mr. Speaker, I've spent my life in soil conservation. I've built more miles of terrace than anybody in the United States Congress. I've done more waterways. I've protected more soil than anybody in Congress, and I've also planted an awful lot of trees and many of which I'll never get to sit in the shade of. I believe in soil conservation, water conservation, and quality. It's my life. I've demonstrated it. I believe in protecting this environment.

But I do not believe in disarming our economy. I do not believe that this equation that's being pushed forward here on global warming is one that will sustain it. I'm particularly suspicious when one of the scientists that back in 1970 signed on and was a leading advocate that there was going to be an ice age that was just around the corner, an impending ice age, at least one of those scientists that was a leading thinker, giving us the scare about a glacier coming down to wipe out our corn fields is now on the global warming side.

I think history will only tell, and we can't affect this climate enough to make it worthwhile for us to unilaterally disarm our economy when the Chinese and the Indians are building more and more generating plants, burning more coal, polluting more air. We can't put a dent in it, Mr. Speaker. But some of the things that we can do, we can look at this problem, what we have, from a more comprehensive perspective.

This, Mr. Speaker, is our energy production chart of the United States of America. Now, we need to be talking about all of the sources of energy that we have. And if you look around the chart, you can see that this is gasoline here in this robin egg blue color; diesel fuel, here; kerosene and jet fuel down here in the white; other petroleum products which might be asphalt and heavy oils and engine oil, those kind of things right here; and then natural gas, a lot of natural gas in yellow. Coal, Mr. SHIMKUS loves that coal, and I support him and clean burning coal. Let's put that on the market. We've got a lot of it.

Here's our nuclear. 11.66 percent of the energy. This is all the energy consumed in the United States. Actually, all the energy produced in the United States. 11.66 of it's nuclear. Even though we haven't built a nuclear plant since 1975, still, of all the energy, 11.66 percent of it is nuclear.

Here's our hydroelectric. We haven't done much of that either, 3.41 percent for water going down the rivers. We're using that to spin generators. And I think that's a green energy. It's renewable energy. It doesn't get categorized as such.

Here's your geothermal, a little bit; wind, a little bit, half a percent. Here's solar, tenth of a percent. Here's ethanol, three-quarters of a percent, and we're producing a lot of it, 9 billion gallons of it last year, but it's three-quarters of 1 percent of all the energy that is produced in America.

□ 2130

Biodiesel; one one-hundredth of a percent. Biomass; some of that's wood burn, 4 percent.

So you see, Mr. Speaker, here is a chart of the energy that we're producing in America. And now, the number down here, 72.1 quadrillion Btus. Just remember the 72.1 because that's really what's operative, Mr. Speaker. And now, that's what we produce.

Here's what we consume. This chart, Mr. Speaker, is the Energy Consumption chart for the United States for 2007. You see roughly similar proportions of the energy sources that we have. You'll see that motor gasoline is a larger percentage of the overall energy consumption chart; 17.44 percent of the gas consumed; and down on this chart, it's 8.29 percent of our production. So we're importing a lot more gas than we're burning. If you go to the diesel fuel, that number is 8.84 percent of the energy consumed as diesel fuel, we're producing only 4 percent overall.

So if you look at this chart, you will see that the diameter of this chart represents the amount of Btus that we are consuming in America. That's 101.4 quadrillion Btus. Just remember, we're producing 72.1 quadrillion Btus, we're consuming 101.4 quadrillion Btus. So just round that off into we're producing 72 percent of the energy that we're consuming.

And now here's another little chart that shows you, Mr. Speaker. And this is the Energy Production chart set on top of the Energy Consumption chart. So you can kind of wind this up and see our natural gas, the size of the natural gas production on the smaller circle versus the natural gas consumption on the larger circle. We can turn this over to nuclear and see what percentage of our production is nuclear versus the percent of our consumption that's nuclear. Turn this around and you can kind of see.

But the main thing that this illustrates is the smaller circle is proportional, Mr. Speaker, to the amount of energy we're producing. The larger circle is proportional to the energy we're

consuming. And so I will submit that each of these pieces of the pie—I will just turn this over so the coal lines up for Mr. SHIMKUS—each of these pieces of the pie needs to grow out to the limits of the diameter of this circle so that together we're producing as much energy, or more, than we're consuming. And then we can engage in this and change the size of these pieces so that we can prioritize the use of our energy.

And I would submit that this natural gas product that's here, the yellow, let's produce a lot more of it. Let's use less to generate electricity; let's use more to produce fertilizer and use it in industry where we produce plastics, et cetera.

But this is where the picture is for the solution. We need more coal, more natural gas. We need more other petroleum products. We need more diesel fuel, more motor gasoline, more biomass, solar, ethanol, biodiesel, wind, geothermal, et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, might I request how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 4 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's just enough time to demonstrate what corn is.

Mr. Speaker, this may be a first on the floor of the United States Congress. In this Ziploc bag is corn. Now, there's a little bit of a misconception out there. There's an argument that we shouldn't turn this into ethanol because people will say, well, that's food. Well, I have chewed on this corn, but we grind it up and feed it to livestock. This isn't human food as we know it. We do convert some of it to syrups and 299 other products, value add. But what happens is we'll bring a bushel of this corn into an ethanol plant, we'll run it through that plant. A third of the volume that you see here will be converted into ethanol. About the same amount of it is wasted when you feed it to livestock anyway, it just isn't usable, so that turns into CO<sub>2</sub>. And that's a waste product right now with ethanol.

The other third of it turns into this; this is a fine product called dried distiller's grain. This is actually high-protein, dried distiller's grain, Mr. Speaker. This gets fed back to livestock. So I'll come down at another time and I'll demonstrate what you do with a bushel of corn. It produces three gallons of ethanol. Half of the feed value in that, at least, goes back to the livestock in the form of dried distiller's grain that I have in this hand. And this food-versus-fuel argument does not hold up right now; it may for the '08 crop, it doesn't for '07.

We've produced more corn than ever before in 2007; that was 13.1 billion bushels. We exported more corn than ever before; that was 2.5 billion bushels. We converted more corn into ethanol than ever before; that was 3.2 billion bushels. And 1.6 billion of that went back to livestock in the form of feed, so you add that back in. And the

amount of corn that was available for domestic consumption was 9.0 billion bushels of corn from the 2007 crop. That's more than ever before, Mr. Speaker. And the average amount of corn available for domestic consumption for the other years in the decade was 7.4 billion bushels.

So there was 1.6 billion more bushels available for domestic consumption, the prices somewhat higher than they ever were before; part of it is a weak dollar, part of it is global demand; part of it is we exported more meat than ever before. And our economy has been rolling and booming.

We have to figure out how to come to grips with this. Ethanol isn't the only answer, drilling is not the only answer, but \$4.08 gas surely is not the answer, Mr. Speaker. And anybody that thinks that drilling for oil is a dead end I think has a dead idea. And the American people are going to stand up and say, Drill ANWR, drill the Outer Continental Shelf, drill the non-national park public lands. Let's have all the energy and all these categories that we have. Let's drive down these prices. Let's boom our economy. And let's get on with where we need to go as a country.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your attention this evening.

#### THE FRESHMEN CLASS OF THE 110TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be here tonight on the floor of the House of Representatives with a number of my colleagues who will be coming in and out, I imagine, as the evening goes on. And I'm also especially glad to be able to follow my colleague from Iowa (Mr. KING), who's got an interesting, but obsolete, perspective on the energy future for this country and what we need to do not only in the current crisis, but for the future of our great country, for the future of our economy, for the future of our energy use.

So tonight we will be talking about what it means to go green. Because, let's face it, green is the new red, white and blue. And before I jump into the energy issues, but sticking with the theme of going green, I cannot help but stand to congratulate the Boston Celtics for winning the NBA finals. And if anybody exemplifies what it means to be green and to be champions, it certainly is the Boston Celtics. It's the kind of lesson that we all could learn in this country.

Many of us in New Hampshire are diehard Celtics fans. And some of a certain age, including myself, remember the great championship Celtic teams from the sixties, seventies and eighties. And this has been the longest stretch in the Celtics' franchise history without winning a championship.

The Boston Celtics last night beat their rival, the Los Angeles Lakers, by a whopping 39 points. It was the first NBA championship for Boston since 1986. Now, Celtics fans are especially proud today of Captain Paul Pierce, who, in the great tradition of Celtic champions like Red Auerbach and Larry Bird and Kevin McHale and Dennis Johnson and other greats, was the obvious choice for the NBA Final MVP Award. I'm proud to stand tonight to congratulate Paul Pierce for securing his place in Celtics history and the rest of the team for bringing the 17th banner back to New England. It's time to go green: Go Celtics.

Now, along with going green, what's important to note is that, as we are here tonight, in my home State of New Hampshire, New Hampshire families are paying record prices for gasoline. Today, the average is \$4.04 for regular gas and \$4.73 for diesel. Last year at about this time, New Hampshire families were paying \$2.92 for regular gas and \$2.82 for diesel.

Now, for some reason, as if to rewrite history, the President of the United States and my Republican colleagues, regrettably, would like to shift the blame for the soaring energy prices to the Democrats in Congress. They would like somehow for the American people to believe that it is simply the fact of the switch of majority in 2006 and Democrats who have been here working hard on reasonable, responsible, smart energy legislation, who are somehow the cause of the pain at the pumps. Well, tonight we'll talk a little truth, we'll talk a little truth to what are outrageous scams. It is simply not true.

The President today proposed, for example, drilling in ANWR. He proposed giving the oil companies even more access to drilling. The President's proposal today is, unfortunately, another page from the administration's energy policy that was literally written by the oil industry. I don't think anybody can forget that it was Vice President CHENEY, an oil man, who, together with President Bush, an oil man, sat in secret with the oil companies to create this country's energy policy.

The product of that energy policy is that today, after the first quarter of 2008, we've had another record year for oil company profits. Apparently Mr. CHENEY's energy policy seems to be working for the oil companies. In 2002, the profits of the oil companies were \$6.5 billion in a quarter. And today, in 2008, first quarter of 2008, the record year for oil company profits, \$36.9 billion in profits, while we pay \$4.04 at the pump.

So the plan from the President now is to give away more public resources to the very same oil companies that are raking in record profits; and all the time those oil companies are sitting on 68 million acres of Federal lands they've already leased; 68 million acres of Federal lands they've already leased