

terrible flooding in Iowa, 24 lives lost already, 40,000 people who had to be evacuated, now is the time to think about how we help them in the future and prevent others from this fate.

This is the second 500-year flood in the last 15 years. There is a thought-provoking article on the front page of today's Washington Post that I would commend to all of my colleagues. It recalls something that I saw when I last visited Iowa, that the whole State has been dramatically replumbed. Ninety percent of the wetlands have been filled and farmed. Last year alone, 106,000 acres in the Conservation Reserve Program were taken out and farmed, acres that would have served as a great big sponge to capture the water instead of making flooding worse.

Because the effects of global warming and planting one-third of the State in corn and soybeans, we should reflect on the human role in the unfolding disaster. Now is the time to review our disastrous farm and water resource policies so that we can protect people in the future from this fate.

EXPLORATION, INNOVATION, AND CONSERVATION

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, the continued rise in energy prices threatens our economy and our national security. There are unfriendly nations around the world that are reliant on the world's addiction to oil. Unstable leaders like Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez delight in our dependence on imported oil and they are invested in using that power to promote their destructive agenda. Our national security is threatened by these circumstances. At the same time, we are sending billions of our dollars out of this country to buy foreign oil.

House Republicans have proposed a sensible plan of exploration, innovation and conservation that outlines long-term and short-term solutions to promote energy independence.

There is absolutely no reason why we cannot expand American oil and natural gas exploration, develop alternative energy sources and promote energy efficiency all at the same time. Incorrectly, the energy debate in this country has been sold as a fight between those who support alternative fuels and those who want to drill. The House Republican plan includes all of the above.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

CONGRESSIONAL AWARD GOLD MEDAL

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the winners of the Congressional Award Gold Medal from my congressional district in south Florida. This award recognizes a significant commitment to community activism, as well as leadership development and physical fitness.

I am proud to recognize Angela Boyd, Addison Craig and Elizabeth Lott from Palm Beach Gardens and Jacob Schattie from Jupiter.

Angela Boyd completed over 450 hours of community service, including raising money for juvenile diabetes.

Addison Craig worked to raise money for organizations dedicated to finding a cure for cancer and heart disease.

Elizabeth Lott completed 500 hours of work with children and cancer patients.

Jacob Schattie was a coach and camp counselor to local youth.

These young men and women are role models for people, young and old, in my community and throughout our country. I am proud to honor these distinguished individuals today.

FINDING SOLUTIONS FOR SKYROCKETING ENERGY PRICES

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about energy, the fact that this is the people's House and the people are speaking. They are speaking loud and clear. Unfortunately, I do not think that the Democratic leadership is listening to the people. Survey after survey says we are tired of sending money to Hugo Chavez. Let's spend that money in the good old USA.

Madam Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, when this new leadership took charge, said we are going to bring real change for America. Well, the real change that this leadership has brought for America is we have the highest gasoline-diesel prices in the history of this country.

Madam Speaker, real change would be for the Democratic leadership for a change to begin to bring bills to the floor of this House that will bring long-term energy security and lower gasoline prices for the American people.

Madam Speaker, it is time for a change. It is time for you to change your position and bring energy legislation to the floor so that American people do not have to suffer and we do not have to send Hugo Chavez any more of our hard-earned money.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, today this body will have an

opportunity to show the American people that we get it. We will be asked to vote on an extension of unemployment insurance for 13 weeks for every State in the country.

Normally, this would be a no-brainer, given the fact that a couple weeks ago we had the largest percentage increase in the number of unemployed. There are almost 4 million Americans without a job who can't find one, and we have had millions of Americans lose their homes through mortgage foreclosures. All of our constituents are paying over \$4 a gallon for gas, almost three times what they were paying before the Bush administration came to office.

But it is not a no-brainer, because many of our Republican colleagues have consistently opposed extending unemployment insurance. A number of times, President Bush said he would veto the bill if we tried to extend unemployment insurance.

Madam Speaker, this is a failed economy. Let's not fail the American people today. Let's extend unemployment insurance.

BRAC/REFINERY BILL DISCHARGE PETITION

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, a new oil refinery has not been built in the United States in over 30 years, and the refineries that we do have are operating at or near capacity. No matter how much crude oil is made available, the United States simply does not have the capacity to refine it. And today we are importing processed refined gasoline, last week, 1.2 million barrels of refined gasoline.

Less than a week after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf, the price for regular gasoline increased by 46 cents, because much of our refining capacity is located along the Gulf Coast. Oil refining capacity is just one of the many aspects of our energy policy that we need to reconsider as gas prices continue their steep climb.

My bill, H.R. 2279, the subject of this week's discharge resolution, would address one of the largest hurdles to building a new refinery; finding land. By using a few closed military bases, we can jump-start the process and help address our refining needs.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE NECESSARY FOR 3.8 MILLION JOBLESS AMERICANS

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

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, millions of Americans all over the United States are struggling to put food on the table and gas in their cars. Imagine at the same time that these prices spike you lose your job and that your

unemployment benefits run out simply because there are not enough jobs to go around. This has happened to 1.6 million Americans. They need our help.

Last week, Congress overwhelmingly passed legislation to immediately extend unemployment insurance for an additional 13 weeks. Today, that bill will be included in the emergency supplemental. This important legislation deserves strong bipartisan support.

With 325,000 jobs lost already this year and 3.8 million workers out of a job, it is imperative we take action now. We must continue to look for immediate solutions to our economic troubles. Extending unemployment insurance is one of the most cost-effective and fast-acting ways to stimulate the economy because the money is spent quickly.

Madam Speaker, President Bush and his allies in Congress should drop their opposition to this bill so we can help millions of Americans who are struggling with this recession economy.

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STORMS AND GAS PRICES

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

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, Hoosiers are struggling in the aftermath of some of the worst storms in our Nation's history. But even amidst the cleanup of last weekend, I was still hearing about gasoline prices.

At more than \$4 a gallon in Indiana, working families, small businesses and family farms are hurting. Everywhere I went I heard the same thing, and it wasn't nationalize our refineries—as the Democrats are apparently planning to do—but the American people I heard from Indiana said drill for more oil on American soil. Hoosiers know the only way to lessen our dependence on foreign oil is to give the American people more access to American oil.

I say to my countrymen, call your Congressman right now and tell this Congress, drill more, drill now, and we will pay less.

HUGE VICTORY FOR AMERICAN SECURITY, AMERICAN WORKERS AND AMERICAN TAXPAYERS

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, yesterday we witnessed a huge victory for American security, American workers and American taxpayers.

The GAO found what many of us suspected all along about the Air Force tanker decision. A flawed process unfairly disadvantaged the American-made Boeing tanker. The Boeing aircraft met or exceeded all of the Air Force criteria. An independent study found that it would create at least twice as many American jobs including, 3,300 in Illinois.

Other studies showed the Boeing aircraft to be 25 percent more fuel efficient than the Airbus, resulting in a savings of nearly \$30 billion and over 2 billion gallons of fuel. On top of all this, I believe that we should not be exporting our national security.

So today I urge my colleagues to join me in urging the Air Force to listen to the GAO, reopen the process and select the best tanker for America.

SKYROCKETING PRICE OF GAS

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

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I come before you today to address the skyrocketing price of gas in Oklahoma, where the price for a gallon of gasoline at a station in my hometown of Cheyenne is now \$3.95. This may be lower than the national average, but Oklahomans are actually paying more of their income on gas than people in areas where gas prices are higher.

According to a study by Common Current, Oklahoma City is ranked last in the ability to weather an oil and gas crisis. This is evidenced by the fact that families in Oklahoma's Third District are spending between 7 and 10 percent of their income on gas.

Congress has an opportunity to make sure that Americans don't have to choose between putting gas in their cars and necessities for their families through H.R. 2279, Expand American Refining Capacity on Closed Military Installations Act.

I ask my colleagues, support H.R. 2279. Sign the discharge petition. Bring this bill to the floor for a vote now.

MIDDLE CLASS AMERICAN FAMILIES ARE STRUGGLING

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

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, middle class families across America are struggling with the rising cost of health care, housing and gas prices brought on by the White House economic policies of the last 8 years.

Unfortunately, Big Oil continues to have a stranglehold over our country's energy policy. The latest proposal from their allies in the White House and other prominent Republicans is to drill for oil just off of our beaches.

But oil companies already have access to 68 million acres that they are not actively tapping, and the administration's own Energy Department reports that opening up new areas would have no impact on the price of gas.

True leaders are working on long-term solutions to reduce our dependence on oil and gas, promote conservation and new renewable technology. This has been the fundamental failure on energy policy of the Bush administration, and now Americans are paying the price. Do not reward Big Oil's latest attempt to grab even more.

Join us in fighting harmful speculation in petroleum markets and our efforts to end the massive, wasteful taxpayer subsidies to big oil companies. Short-term political gimmicks are no substitute for real leadership.

THIS IS NOT A FAILED ECONOMY

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, this is not a failed economy. We are not in a recession. What a shame that Democrats want to talk down the economy.

Under a Democratic President, 6 percent unemployment was considered full employment. Unemployment now is 5.5 percent, not indicative of a failed economy. What is a problem are high gas prices brought to us by a failed Democratically controlled Congress, failed Democratically controlled Congress, a do-nothing-to-reduce-gas-prices Democratically controlled Congress.

Americans want us to do something to reduce gas prices, but Democrats continue to stonewall because they think they can blame President Bush and help themselves. What a shame.

We can bring down prices by producing American energy products. Let's do it now.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES PAID PARENTAL LEAVE ACT

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, with Mother's Day and Father's Day behind us, it's time for us to practice what we preach. If we truly believe in the value of family, then we need to value the work that families do.

U.S. workers, unlike most workers worldwide, do not have the right to take paid time off to care for the birth of a new child. That is why the House should offer a model to the rest of the country by passing the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act when it comes to the floor today. This bill provides 4 weeks of paid time off for all Federal employees to care for a new child.

This landmark bill will be the first to recognize that parents need their earnings, even as they need time off, to care for their new child.

Congress's action on family values should more than match its rhetoric. We should be the role model for all employers.

According to a Harvard study, the U.S. ranks 169th in the world in terms of providing paid time off. We are tied with Swaziland. TOM DAVIS is bipartisan and has been a cosponsor for 10 years. Let's pass it unanimously in a bipartisan recognition of family values.