

companies that were there when Saddam Hussein threw us out, and we basically had the whole country.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KAGEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KAGEN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1345

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BRADY of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HOLT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. REICHERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SHIMKUS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REAL ENERGY SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that I'm able to be here today with my friend, Mr. SHIMKUS, and I think that he has some travel plans, so I'm going to immediately yield to him. And I can't wait to hear what he's got to say.

Mr. SHIMKUS. I'd like to thank my colleague from Georgia. And, you know, we're fortunate still, in today's high energy prices, to be able to use aviation. Aviation fuel is up. Budget airlines are broke, four of them so far. Baggage handlers are out of work. Ticket takers are out of work.

And part of the problem that America's facing is the high price of energy. And this is not a new debate that we've had since I've been here. And it's interesting how the votes have come down since 1994. And I think the public would really find them astonishing that on

almost every production bill, production means producing something, almost every production bill, whether it's Outer Continental Shelf, whether it's oil shale, whether it's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, whether it's coal-to-liquid technologies, Republicans vote 90 percent of the time in support of production, and my friends on the other side, the Democrats vote 90 percent of the time in opposition to production.

So since we've had this fight for many, many years, almost decades now, it was Jimmy Carter who set aside the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil and gas exploration. It was President Bill Clinton who vetoed the ability to explore the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in 1995. Had he not done that, that oil would be here in our country today.

So now we find ourselves in a dilemma. It's Economics 101. It's supply and demand. Limited supply, increased demand, higher prices.

Here's the problem. January 2001, the price of a barrel of crude oil was \$23, just 7 years ago. When the new majority came in in January of 2006, the price of a barrel of crude oil was \$58.31. This was not acceptable. I didn't like this. That's why we passed, in between this time, the 2005 Energy and Policy Act. And on this floor, that bill had the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in it. Of course it went to the Senate and it went there to die. And they pulled ANWR out.

Today the problem has grown by exponential amounts. Today the price of a barrel of crude oil is \$136.39. So I'd like to keep this debate simple. This is a problem. So what is a solution?

And we're going to hear a lot, we've heard a lot of solutions from the other side. None of their solutions talk about bringing on more supply.

And we've had some great victories this week. FISA, Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, funding of the troops, no restrictions, GI bill expansion, great victories that came about through bipartisan compromise on this floor, bills that will get signed by the President. And we're all pretty pleased with the work we did this week.

We can do that with this. There is a congressional majority that would vote for more supply. There's only one hang up. It's the Speaker of the House will not let these bills on the floor.

So you have done a great job, and I used my 1 minute, Congressman WESTMORELAND, to sign your petition. And I want to challenge and encourage all my colleagues, in a bipartisan manner, to come down and sign this petition, this pledge. And I hope the constituents from all over the country ask their congressmen have they signed this pledge.

The pledge is pretty simple. I will vote to increase U.S. oil production and lower gas prices for America. And there I am, right there, just signed it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. That's about as simple as it gets, isn't it?

Mr. SHIMKUS. It doesn't have to be. This is not a difficult process.

Now, since I signed the pledge, the question is how do we do this?

Well, we know how we do it. These red areas on this map is called the Outer Continental Shelf, OCS. You hear it talked about on this floor a lot. These areas, which is the West Coast, all the West Coast, all of the East Coast, and the eastern half of the Gulf of Mexico, are off limits, off limits. We can't research it, we can't investigate it, we definitely can't find and produce oil and gas. And we know there's billions of barrels of oil and trillions of cubic feet of natural gas, and we don't have access to it because of our policies in this, on this, in this building on an appropriation bill, not even an authorization bill.

And we're going to get a chance to get appropriation bills on the floor, and we're going to raise this issue when this bill comes to the floor, and we're going to challenge our friends on the other side to say, you know what? It's time. This is too much. We need to open up the OCS, the Outer Continental Shelf.

What's another solution?

Well, I live in the State of Illinois, and geologically, the State of Illinois is, if you go down far enough, it's a big, huge field of coal. It's called the Illinois Coal Basin. We have as much energy, BTU, British Thermal Units of energy as Saudi Arabia has of oil.

You hear my friends on the other side, they're worried about Iraq; they're worried about the Middle East; they're worried about our reliance on imported crude oil. You know, if we were in the OCS, if we were using our coal and turning it into liquid fuel, we wouldn't have to worry about the Middle East.

But since we are denied the opportunity to go into the Outer Continental Shelf, we have to have energy. It's their own policy that's forcing us to be involved in these international arenas. You know, I'd like to tell those folks, take a hike; we don't need you. And we have our own energy here.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. If I could just interrupt, claim back my time for just 1 minute in the fact that they want us to use alternative fuels. They want to go to alternative fuels and we do to. We think that is something that we need to be developing.

But this, what you're talking about the, the Outer Continental Shelf, the U.S. coal, the shale oil, those are things that we know we have. And the funny part about what they want us to do about using alternative fuels, there was section 526, if you'll remember, in a defense bill that said that the U.S. government could not use alternative fuels. So, you know, which is it? Do they want us to or not?

And so, you know, that's where we're caught, and that's what a lot of people, I think, to my friend in America, don't understand that we're getting a lot of conflicting things from the majority side right now.

Mr. SHIMKUS. And part of that alternative fuel debate is coal-to-liquid technologies. And this is not just keeping energy costs down. This is a job. This is a job issue.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. A good-paying job.

Mr. SHIMKUS. And people can follow this. You have a coal mine. Good, high-paying jobs. You build a coal-to-liquid refinery. It's not a crude oil refinery. It's its own coal-to-liquid refinery. It was done in World War II by the Germans. It's known technology. U.S. jobs building the refinery, U.S. jobs operating the refinery.

Then you build a pipeline. U.S. jobs. And you ship it to airports and military installations. You know, for every dollar increase in the price of a barrel of crude oil it costs our United States Air Force \$60 million because we are the largest consumer of jet fuel in the world?

And that goes directly to our taxpayers because we have to fund our war machines to protect this country and just to train.

So coal-to-liquid technologies is another way for me to support your call for pledges.

Well, we've got another option here. I love talking about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I already mentioned President Jimmy Carter. I already mentioned President Bill Clinton.

And I've got a little park in my hometown of Collinsville, Illinois called Woodland Park. Maybe it's not even a square mile. And I can understand if the folks in my hometown say, well, we don't want you drilling in that little park. I don't want people drilling in that little park either.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the size of the State of South Carolina. The drilling platform would be the size of Dulles Airport.

Put it in perspective. Take a football field and put a postage stamp on that football field. That is what we're talking about as far as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and we know we have billions of barrels of oil there. That's not disputed. And it's just a matter of, if I'm going to support your pledge, I'm going to support more supply.

And again, you know, I know I've got a lot of good friends on the other side. I call them "fossil fuel Democrats." They believe in it. They understand the importance of it for job creation and manufacturing and being competitive. And given the opportunity, we would have their vote. I mean, there's 10 percent of them at least I know. I bet there's about 40. Once we get that on the floor, any of these bills, I bet we can get about 40 Democrats' votes.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And to my friend, reclaiming my time for just a moment. That is the reason that I came up with the petition because there were so many people that were signing petitions on the Internet, drill here, drill now, lower prices, other locations, that I knew we will never get to have a straight up or down vote on

the drilling, onshore, offshore and adding refineries. And so that's the reason I wanted to come up with the petition.

And I appreciate the gentleman making the point. This is the only way the American people will ever know how their congressman feels is by his or her signing this petition, because they will have no chance to have that simple of a vote.

And what this petition says, I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans. And you know, some things may be too simple for some of these legislators to understand. They keep wanting to make it complicated. It's not complicated, because to sign that pledge and they know that they're never going to get to vote on it. I think it would at least let their constituents know that they have some feeling for them when those people ride up to the gas pump and feel that pain at the pump.

Mr. SHIMKUS. And what I like about this debate is what we're talking about is we want American-made energy. And when you have American-made energy, you have American jobs. And when you have American jobs, you have American taxpayers. And when you have American taxpayers, they're funding the local schools, they're funding the local park districts, they're funding the local counties and the States.

When we say no to energy production in the United States, we're saying no to jobs. We're saying no to our tax base. We're saying no to our schools. In fact, when we say no to production, one of the biggest challenges many school districts are going to have is paying for the increase in diesel costs for the bus companies to pick up kids to go to school this fall because diesel prices have doubled. And that's true across the board, in any job, because everything, this building has an energy variable. And as energy prices go up, the costs to keep the lights on go higher. Taxpayers have to pay more.

And the only way that I get frustrated with this is because it doesn't have to be this way. It does not have to be this way. And I would challenge my friends on the environmental left, give us some standards. Give us some, tell us how clean is clean? We will meet those standards.

□ 1400

But it's a moving target. There's no certainty. No one wants to invest. In fact, there's some people who say we're done with false carbon fuel. We're done with coal. We're done with crude oil. We're going to go all wind, we're going to go all solar, and we're going to be able to meet our electricity demand. And those who follow the market and the electricity demands in this country know that that is impossible because most of these people say no to nuclear.

That's why when we started this debate about 18 months ago, "no" is not an energy policy. You can't say no and say you have an energy policy, and that is unfortunately what we have on the other side.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And can I read one comment?

This was from Greenpeace. They say, Let's end fossil fuel use. For decades, we have relied on oil, coal, and gas to meet our ever-increasing energy needs. And now we are facing the consequences for our actions in global warming.

You know, 85 percent of our energy consumption today is supplied by fossil fuels. This is the base of the majority party, and this is what is driving our energy policy in Congress today. And I think what the gentleman has gone through, especially with the coal and the shale to oil to liquid, just reiterates the Democrats' position almost precisely what Greenpeace stated on their Web site.

Mr. SHIMKUS. And the lights in this building that we enjoy and the air conditioning in this building that we enjoy is produced from a coal-generating plant. Fifty percent of all electricity in this country is produced by coal. And it's not a dirty word. It is the lowest cost fuel. It provides the highest standard of living. And why do you think India and China are rapidly moving, China building a coal-fired power plant every 2 weeks? Because they want their country and their people to move into the middle class, and they're going to do it through the use of fossil fuels. And that's what has made our country great. And that's their target, and they're not going to be concerned about climate as we know they're not.

I want to thank my colleague for letting me join him in his special order. I have got to now use the great benefits of technology and travel and fossil fuel use and get on my plane and get back to the great State of Illinois.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Have a safe trip.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for this, and sorry, but he had to take a little trip.

And I want to go back, first of all, and just talk about the petition for a minute and the fact that I had been contacted by several of my constituents, Mr. Speaker, asking me if I had gone on to some of these web pages and signed the petition that said, one said, drill here, drill now, pay less. There were some others. I don't know the particular names. And then I was in a service station/grocery store that had a petition laying on the counter where you paid. It said, Sign this if you want to lower gas prices.

And so what I found is that the American people were doing everything that they could, Mr. Speaker, to let us know, Members of Congress, the people who are sworn to take action to help our constituents, the people were telling us. But there was no way for them to know how we felt about reducing the price of gas because under the new majority, we will never have an opportunity to vote on these things because they know if they brought it to the floor that it would pass and it would hurt their base, the radical environmentalists.

So I tried to come up with something as simple as possible because I believe in simplicity and people can understand the simplicity.

So I came up with my own petition, Mr. Speaker. And this petition was for the 435 Members that have the ability to vote in this House and then the delegates from some of the other territories. And it says, American energy solutions for lower gas prices. Bring onshore oil on line, bring deep water oil on line, and bring new refineries on line.

A lot of people might not realize with the refinery part of it that we haven't built a refinery in this country since 1978, 30 years since we built a refinery. A lot of people would be amazed to know that we import from Canada, Great Britain, Norway, a number of other OPEC nations, 6.9 billion gallons of refined gasoline into this country every year, about the same amount of diesel fuel because we cannot even refine what crude oil that we've got.

So I have made these boards up. I have had them up now, today is Friday, and we have had them up 4 days this week and 1 day last week. And it is so simple that it is confusing a lot of people on this floor. It says, House of Representatives energy petition. I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I know that you understand that. I understand that. But some people must not understand it because we've only had 170 people sign it. And so if this bill comes to the floor, which I don't think—and by the way, the Speaker said today that she's bringing four energy bills next week, and I'm going to talk about them in a minute and give you some kind of idea how they're going to help.

But this is real simple, it just says that whoever is representing you will vote to increase our U.S. oil production. Because see, we shouldn't be in a position—because to me, we're the greatest Nation in the world. And Mr. Speaker, we shouldn't put the leader of the free world, the President of this country, in a position to where Mr. SCHUMER from the Senate or Ms. PELOSI, the Speaker of the House, is asking him to go hat-in-hand to countries that are basically our enemies and asking them to increase their oil production to use their natural resources for our benefit.

Now, somebody is not thinking clearly. We don't need to put our President in that position. We don't need to be asking anybody anything when in this country in shale oil in the western States we have 1.5 trillion barrels. That's more than Saudi Arabia has. And so why in the world do we want to be in this position?

So I came up with a petition. Right now we have 170 people that have signed the petition. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to give the American people an opportunity, and I know I can't talk to them, but if I could talk to them, if I could address them, I would tell them

for real energy solutions that they would want to go to www.house.gov/westmoreland and see if their Congressman has signed this petition.

And when you call them, you might get some dancing, some shuffling around. There is no dancing, there is no shuffling. It's one sentence. One sentence: I will vote to increase U.S. oil production and lower gas prices for Americans. I will be quiet about the petition for a minute. Here is the address.

I will say one thing about one individual that signed this. And his name is NEIL ABERCROMBIE, and he's from the great State of Hawaii. Neil is the only Democrat that has signed the petition. He's the only Democrat that has signed the petition. And he knows that at some point in time, we have got to start. And he knows that the party line that, you know, there's 68 million acres out there that's been leased, and that's true, but there's 2.5 trillion acres that could be leased, Mr. Speaker. But this Congress has passed bans that says you can't. The President has said he's willing to take off the executive order if Congress would move to take off our order. We're not going to move on that.

So I want to congratulate NEIL and all of the people that he represents for him having the courage. And he's given some of the greatest speeches on the floor of this House that I've heard in my 16 years of legislative experience, not just in here but in the State of Georgia. So NEIL, my hat's off to you and you should be congratulated.

I want to talk about for just a couple of minutes, I know I have got several of my colleagues here to join me, but I wanted to talk for a minute about what the Democrats have done so far in the 110th Congress. Because see, back in April, and if you will remember the gentleman, Mr. SHIMKUS, had a thing up about when the Democrats took over this Congress in 2006, that oil was about \$56 a barrel. What happened was when they were running for office, Speaker PELOSI said back in April of 2006, Democrats have a commonsense plan for lowering the skyrocketing price of gasoline.

Now, keep in mind that the skyrocketing price at the time was about \$2.26 a gallon. Man. Did you ever think you would long for the days when gas was \$2.26 a gallon?

Anyway, we have yet to see that secret plan. They have brought out some plans, but I don't think they've really brought out the secret plan yet.

I want to quote a little bit here from the Democrats. They passed a price gouging prevention, and you can see right here. Here is the Democrats' philosophy on lowering the gas prices: Sue OPEC. That's gone a long ways. Launch the seventh investigation into price gougers. The seventh investigation. Mr. Speaker, I think the American people want us to get out of the committee hearing, the investigation mode, and get into the action mode. We're in the fetal position mode right now.

Launch the fourth investigation into speculators, \$20 billion in new taxes on oil producers. Mr. Speaker, that took an economic genius to figure out that raising taxes \$20 billion on a producer or a manufacturer is going to lower the price to the consumer.

Halt oil shipments to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve would save a nickel a gallon. So their price, it brings it down from \$4.08 to \$4.03.

But I want to read you some of the quotes.

This was the Federal Price Gouging Prevention Act, H.R. 1252, that the Democrats in this body passed on May 23, 2007. May 23, 2007, was when this was passed. "This bill has been around for over a year. So let's stop the excuses. American people don't want arguments about that process. They want relief at the pump, and that's what we're doing today. Lookit, today Members of the House have a very simple choice. Vote to stand up with consumers, your constituents, who are paying record gasoline prices, nationwide average, record prices, or vote to protect big oil companies' enormous profits."

□ 1415

That was Representative BART STUPAK on May 23, 2007.

When this was passed, oil was \$65.77. As you saw earlier, it's \$136-and-change now. At the time this was passed, the national average was \$3.22 a gallon. It is now \$4.08 a gallon. So you see the price gouging does not work, Mr. Speaker.

Another comment: "Mr. Speaker, again, the American consumers need us to act, they want us to act, they demand that we do act. Now is the time." Congressman BOBBY RUSH on May 23, 2007. I think that action was just a charade because it has not helped the price of our gas.

And so while we look at these things, we've got to understand that the things that the Democrats are wanting to do does not do it.

Now, let's look over here at what my petition does or at least asks to do on the Republican side. Bring onshore oil online, ANWR, shale, anywhere from 70 cents to \$1.60 a gallon; bring deepwater oil online, OCS, 90 cents to \$2.50 a gallon; bring new refineries online, 15 cents to 45 cents. That would bring it down probably to about \$2.10 a gallon. These are actions. These others are charades.

And so I think the American people, Mr. Speaker, are tired of the charades. But let me just identify one more charade that we've had, and Mr. Speaker, that was when we had H.R. 6022, the Strategic Petroleum Reserve Fill Suspension and Consumer Protection Act of 2008. This was passed on May 13, 2008, and you can see, halt oil shipments to the strategic petroleum, a nickel. So this is the bill.

Here was the quote from Chairman DINGELL: "While there is no guarantee that putting this oil onto the market rather than into the SPR will lower

prices, even such a modest step could potentially prick the speculative bubble now characterizing oil markets."

Mr. Chairman, it didn't prick anything because evidently it made them mad because it has gone up. But let me tell you what will prick that speculative market. What will prick it is when we vote to put a drill bit in the ground, and just by us voting to put the drill bit in the ground, the speculation will stop.

Representative PETER WELCH, the lead sponsor, said this: "When we have reduced oil going into the SPR in the past it has proven to actually have a direct and immediate impact on lowering the price of gas at the pump from 5 cents to 25 cents a gallon.

"And basically the question for us is whether or not, even as we have to proceed with long-term debates about our future energy policy, is this Congress going to be willing to take a short-term step that has the potential to bring down energy prices."

Congressman WELCH, there was not a lot of potential there because prices have gone up.

Representative NICK LAMPSON from Texas, somebody that should know about drilling and the benefits that drilling would do to bring down the price of energy: "This bill provides a quick first step, maybe not much, but at least it's an action on the part of our Congress.

"Suspending the SPR will put an additional 70,000 barrels of oil on the market each day. It could help reduce prices at a critical time for us in our country."

It has not reduced the price at all.

Representative JASON ALTMIRE: "This Congress has to act. And we are going to act today. And we are going to save the American people a quarter on the gallon."

So, when you go into the service station to fill up tomorrow or the next day or tonight, ask them if they've heard that we have passed the Strategic Petroleum Reserve Fill Suspension and Consumer Protection Act of 2008, because I can promise you your gas will not be 25 cents a gallon less than what it was on the day we passed this.

I'd now like to recognize my friend from North Carolina, the battering ram as some people call her in here, but she's one of the most fierce legislators that I've ever met in my career, and the congresswoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX. I want to thank my colleague from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) for the great leadership he's providing on this issue today and other days here in the Congress. I think it's extremely important to explain to the American people what is not happening in the Congress, even though they are asking us to do things.

Now, I am very much a person of action. I believe in getting as much done as we possibly can. The old saying is, as long as the Congress is not in ses-

sion, the American people are safe. And we often accomplish a lot of negative things here, but on this issue, that is what we have done is accomplish a lot of negative things. We need to be accomplishing positive things.

I think my colleague well-characterized what's been going on as a charade. When I was in the General Assembly in North Carolina, I often gave an award called the Emperor's New Clothes Award because I gave it to bills that didn't do anything but that nobody was willing to say wasn't doing anything. And I think what the Democratically-controlled Congress—and that's what we have to keep saying because many Americans blame both Democrats and Republicans for not doing something—but they have to understand that it is the Democratically-controlled Congress that's creating the problem here. What they've done has been a charade. It deserves the Emperor's New Clothes Award, and I hope most people have read that little book and understand the issue that I'm talking about.

Let me say that these are very recent polls that have been done. Sixty-seven percent of the American people believe drilling should be allowed in offshore wells off the coast of California, Florida and other States. Sixty-two percent believe that the price of gas has gotten so high that we need to begin drilling for oil in an environmentally safe way. And 57 percent support allowing drilling in U.S. coastal and wilderness areas now off limits.

And let me contrast the opinion of the American public with what the Democrats have done over the years.

In the last 12 or 14 years, there have been many bills put in, one on drilling in ANWR, and 91 percent of Republicans supported that; 86 percent of Democrats opposed it.

Turning coal-to-liquid, which is a good way to be using coal, 97 percent of Republicans supported it; 78 percent of House Democrats opposed it.

Oil shale exploration, 90 percent of House Republicans supported it; 86 percent of Democrats opposed it.

The Outer Continental Shelf, 125 miles off the coast of the country, you're not going to see the wells. You're not going to see the effect, and we can do it without polluting the ocean or polluting our environment in any way. Eighty-one percent of House Republicans supported; 83 percent of House Democrats opposed it.

Increasing refinery capacity, my colleague has done a very fine job of explaining why that's important to increasing supply. Ninety-seven percent of House Republicans supported it; 96 percent of House Democrats opposed it.

So over the last 12 or 14 years, on the bills that have come up on these issues, on average 91 percent of House Republicans have voted to increase the production of American-made oil and gas, while 86 percent of House Democrats have historically voted against it.

We need to increase the supply. I believe that part of the problem is be-

cause the Democrats are so out of touch with what's happening in America. Many of them have been in Washington 50 years or more. They don't go home on weekends. They don't associate with average Americans. They've never worked in a business. They have no idea how all the businesses in America are being affected.

My family runs a nursery and landscaping business. To put a vehicle out on the road, especially one that uses diesel fuel, is costing two-and-a-half times what it cost a year ago, 18 months ago, when the Democrats took over.

All we've gotten from the Democrats are empty promises, and as I said, they deserve the Emperor's New Clothes Award because it doesn't work.

Their latest Emperor's New Clothes Award claim has to do with use-it-or-lose-it, which is already the law of the land. They're blaming the oil companies. They are so good at blaming everybody else and deflecting attention from themselves when they're the ones to blame. They want to blame the oil companies. They want to say the oil companies are making a huge profit. It's not popular to defend oil companies, but right now, the oil companies' profit is about 7.5 cents on the dollar. The average profit of most businesses in this country, the Standard and Poor's businesses, those listed on the stock exchange, is about 8.5 percent. I heard the other day Microsoft is about 21 percent. But I don't see the Democrats going after them.

Generally, they hate business and industry because they think they're the evil people in this country, but thank goodness we have had the oil companies providing the oil and gasoline that we've needed over the years.

So they want to do something called use-it-or-lose-it. Well, you know, folks, the oil companies already have a clause in their contracts. They either drill for oil within 10 years or they lose the lease. Guess who changed the lease time from 5 years to 10 years. The Democrats, back in 1992. Do you ever hear them admit that? No, they don't admit it, but that's what happened.

We already are regulating the oil business tremendously. They are not the problem. It's the Democrats who are the problem. And we can't say that often enough on this floor because not enough Americans are listening. Half the people in the country think Republicans are still in charge. We're not in charge. We're the good guys. We're the ones wanting to produce more American-made products for you to use. We didn't say we had a plan to bring down the price of gasoline, but we do, and our plan will work.

We're still waiting for Democrats to bring their plan. They haven't brought it. We'd love to see it. But as my colleagues said, it's a charade. I like that term, and I want to say it deserves the Emperor's New Clothes Award because, folks, it ain't there.

So I thank my colleague for sharing some time with me today and for

bringing this Special Order to the floor today and helping people understand before the weekend, as you go out there and you are filling up your tanks, you can hold responsible the Democratically-controlled Congress, the do-nothing-to-produce-more-energy Congress for the problems that you're having.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Ms. FOXX, after these bills come to the floor next week, or if we ever do get a chance to see them, we're going to have to bring back the old truth squad to make sure that the American people, Mr. Speaker, get the truth.

It's now my honor to yield to a friend of mine that came in shortly after I did to Congress, and if I could name anybody in this Congress a taxpayers's friend, I would have to name JOHN CAMPBELL. And so I yield to him.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I thank my friend, Mr. WESTMORELAND from Georgia, and you are equally a friend of the taxpayer and a Georgia bulldog in terms of fighting for taxpayers and consumers and for Americans to be more free rather than less free in the future. Thank you for yielding.

I stand here in front of this chart which says that gasoline is \$4.09, which is the national average. As my friend indicated, I'm from California. I can tell you that this last weekend when I was home I paid \$4.91 for premium unleaded.

□ 1430

In California, where we have even more restrictions on refineries and fuel and gasoline than you do nationally, our price is even higher than it is nationally, so we're headed for \$5-a-gallon gasoline in California.

The one thing that's not very well known is it's not going to stop there. Natural gas price has gone up as well. The price of natural gas is now about 50 percent higher than it was just about 6 months ago. Now, in my home State of California, about 95 percent of our heating comes from natural gas and about 50 percent of our electricity comes from natural gas. So my constituents are already being shocked at the gas pump; but come this summer, they're about to be shocked with their electric bill. And come this winter, they will be shocked with their natural gas heating bill.

All these energy prices are going up. They're impacting consumers, and they're impacting businesses. I can't tell you how many business owners I have talked to that are being squeezed by the price of fuel in the costs of their products, whether it's a pizza place that delivers, or whether it is a delivery place that has delivery trucks. It doesn't matter what it is, whatever you get, it got to you because somebody brought it. And when somebody brought it, they used some kind of fuel to do that, and the price of that fuel is up. And those businesses can't pass that price on right now because the

economy is so weak. And so if they pass that cost on, consumers won't pay it and their volume will go down and down, so businesses are being squeezed.

I talked to an owner of a company the other day who has a lot of his employees—we have long commutes, often, in California—and the price of their commute has gotten so high that he's probably going to see if—which, again, is often restricted by State law—the company can go to a 4-day work week or maybe even a 3-day work week in order to reduce the huge costs that his employees have commuting 50, 60, 70 miles to and from work every day. So this is impacting everybody. It's the biggest issue I hear about when I go home.

And so what are we doing? What is this Democratic-led Congress leading us to do? I mean, it's affecting homes, it's affecting businesses, jobs, employment, the economy, everything. And what are we doing here? Nothing. This Democratic-led Congress is doing absolutely nothing on the biggest issue that is facing America today.

A week or so ago we did pass a resolution, though, commemorating the end of the Revolutionary War 225 years ago. Now, that's great. I mean, I'm glad we had an American Revolution. I'm glad we won, I'm glad it ended. But I think we could be doing a little more productive things on the floor of this House with energy and with energy prices.

Now, the Democrats on the other side, they will have you saying, oh, well, we can't do this and we can't do that and we can't do the other. Let me tell you what I think and what we Republicans think we should do: Everything. There shouldn't be anything off the table, basically, in this discussion because of the crisis we're in and because of the magnitude of this situation.

Let me try and break it down into three areas of things that we ought to be doing. And the first is more production and supply and delivery of oil and natural gas. Now, you will hear Democrats say, oh, I heard Senator OBAMA the other day say, oh, that won't affect the price for 5 years; you won't get any of that oil out for 5 years. True, you won't get any of that oil out for 5 years, but markets are anticipatory. Part of the reason that gas prices are so high today is because of the markets anticipating increasing demand in India, in China, and in Brazil that will eat up more supply. If we send a strong message from this House of Representatives that we are going to do everything we can to produce more oil and gas from everywhere we can produce, the markets will react to that. Does that mean it will go back to where it was? No. And that's not the only thing we should do. But it is something we should do, and it should be one of the clubs we have in our bag that we use to bring these numbers down.

Second, we should be trying to develop all alternative forms of energy

that are out there in order to reduce the demand on the fossil fuels. Now, the first thing we should be looking at is nuclear. Now, you look at France, Japan and Sweden. Sweden, arguably the most environmentally conscious country on Earth, and they get over 80 percent of their power from nuclear. What shocks me, Mr. WESTMORELAND, is that I hear the Democrats say all the time, well, we want to do more nuclear power if it is safe. You always hear the qualification, "if it is safe." Oh, my gosh; you've got three big countries out there have 80 percent. You can go to Italy and a whole bunch of other countries where they're producing a significant amount of their energy from nuclear and no one has had problems.

To say "it is safe," and everyone looks back at Three Mile Island, but that was 40 years ago almost, that would be like looking at a 40-year-old Altair computer and trying to assess whether you could run things with that computer today.

Nuclear technology has progressed every bit as much. And the nuclear technology that exists today is much more efficient and much safer than anything we had a long time ago. And we should be putting up nuclear plants as quick as we can and replacing those natural gas plants, replacing some of those others.

Liquefying coal is another thing we should be doing. We are the Saudi Arabia of coal. We have more coal in the United States than any other country on Earth. And second, by the way, is China. And what are the Chinese doing? Developing their coal and using their coal as quickly as they can. And what are we doing? Nothing. And then we should be looking at other alternative fuels like methanol, ethanol, butanol, all these different possible fuels.

But let's talk about ethanol for a second. You've heard a lot about it. We hear a lot about the subsidies and making it from corn, but the best thing to make ethanol from is sugar. But in this country, we have a huge tariff, I believe it's 75 percent—I could be wrong on that, but I believe it's 75 percent on imported ethanol and imported sugar.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Fifty-four cents a gallon.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Fifty-four cents a gallon. Fifty-four cents a gallon—thank you, Mr. WESTMORELAND—tax on imported ethanol or imported sugar cane to make ethanol. Why? If we think this might be one of our future alternative fuels, why would we tax it more than we tax anything else? It makes no sense. So we should be developing all of those alternative fuels.

Wind and solar, them, too, although they will never be more than 1 or 2 or 3 percent, but we should be developing them as well, and hydrothermal.

And then the third leg of this stool is efficiency. Yes, we need to have more efficient cars. Yes, we need to have

more efficient homes. Yes, we should have more efficient production capacities in business. And yes, we should do all that, too. But we can't do it only on efficiency, we can't do it only on oil production, we can't do it only on alternatives, we need to do all three.

And what so disappoints me about the majority Democrats in this House is some of them want to do one of those, occasionally they want to do two, nobody wants to do all three on the Democratic side. But that's what we need to do.

This is a crisis; it's not going to go away soon. And the American people have the right to have us in this House react and give them the tools they need to get the price of energy down to help them lift this economy.

I thank you for the time, Mr. WESTMORELAND. I yield back to my friend from Georgia.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you, Mr. CAMPBELL. And I'm going to go back down front and play a little musical chairs here.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Okay. Then I will stand here until you get here so we don't have a blank blue screen. Thank you very much.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you, sir.

You know, I want to just show the American people: We're not going to immediately drill ourselves out of the spot, Mr. Speaker. But in 1995, the Congress passed drilling in ANWR. President Clinton vetoed it. Had he not vetoed it in 1995 we would be getting one million barrels of oil today out of ANWR.

So is this an immediate relief? No. It's immediate relief from, I think, the speculation and the amount of escrowing. But this is an all-of-the-above issue. We've got to start drilling. We've got to start doing alternative fuels. We've got to build refineries. We've got to be doing onshore and offshore drilling. We've got to do coal-to-liquid. There are a lot of things we have to do and not just lay here in a fetal position.

But this is what really burns me up when I think about being dependent on foreign oil. This is a picture of Mr. Chavez from Venezuela and Mr. Castro from Cuba. In a recent interview on al Jazeera, Chavez called for developing nations to unite against U.S. political and economic policies. "What We Can 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 and are an example of how we use oil in our war against neo liberalism," he said. If you saw it on TV this morning, you saw where he threatened the European nations with no more Venezuelan oil because they passed an immigration law that he didn't like. This guy is not our friend. The bottom, on March 15, 2005, Washington Post; or as he put it on another occasion, "We have invaded the United States with our oil."

Now, I'm fixing to show you something, Mr. Speaker, and I don't know if you can see it or not, but maybe you'll get a look at it. But Mr. Speaker, I'm going to show you something that's really going to burn you up. This is a copy of the check that American families and businesses write to Mr. Chavez. Every day, 365 days a year, we write him a check for \$170,250,000. Mr. Speaker, that's a crime. We could be writing those checks to American men and women with the jobs that we would create if we would use our own natural resources for our own benefit.

So Mr. Speaker, I've got 5 minutes to close. And I want to put up this address, because this address, Mr. Speaker, is for real energy solutions. It's a simple address, www.house.gov/westmoreland. And you can go to that address, Mr. Speaker—and I hope you will go tonight, Mr. Speaker—and see the names on there that have signed the petition, the commonsense petition, a petition that just says "I will vote to increase oil production to lower the price of gas for Americans." That's as simple as you can get, Mr. Speaker. We had 32,000 hits on this Web site either last night or the night before last. Americans want to know where their Congressman represent.

And Mr. Speaker, let me close by saying this: So many politicians today that the American people hear on TV are talking about change. And I don't know if it's the kind of change that we're thinking about because, as an American citizen, the change that I hope that Congress or that elected officials would have, Mr. Speaker, is a change that they would be honest, that they would be honest with what they tell the American people and not come to Washington and write a bunch of legislation that's very confusing about what it really means.

And I read your excerpts today, Mr. Speaker, that read what some of your colleagues had said about the legislation that they passed and what it was going to do for fuel prices. And some of that legislation was over a year ago, and it has just continued, gas is at \$4.08 a gallon. But Mr. Speaker, if I could talk to the American people, I would tell them this: that there will never really be any change in this country, Mr. Speaker, until the people that get up every morning that are citizens of this land, that look in the mirror, and if that person, Mr. Speaker, that they see in the mirror will not change, then we're not going to change.

And so sometimes it takes effort, Mr. Speaker, from the men and women out there that watch us and listen to us and abide by the laws that we make to take things into their own hands and to let us know how they feel. Over a million people have signed a petition, "Drill Here, Drill Now, Pay Less." We're hearing from them. We need to hear from you.

Mr. Speaker, if I could talk to the American people, I would tell them, your Congressman and your Senator

need to hear from you. You need to know if they're willing to vote to increase the production of oil in this country from our own natural resources, be less dependent on foreign oil and foreign resources, and lower the price of American gas. And you can find out if your Congressman is on that petition or not by going to house.gov/westmoreland.

You're going to hear all kind of arguments of why they didn't sign it or haven't signed it, but Mr. Speaker, those arguments are so simple that the argument doesn't even hold up.

So Mr. Speaker, with that, I'm going to yield the well and yield my time here, and just thank you for your patience in listening to the truth that's been brought to you. And thank my friends that have come down tonight, my colleagues that have come down to help me, Mr. Speaker, try to explain to the American people that we're serious about bringing them some relief at the pump.

□ 1445

PEAK OIL

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that my colleagues for the last hour helped to make the point that oil is high and gasoline is high because there is an imbalance between supply and demand. There are a lot of differences of opinion as to how we got here, why we're here and what we ought to do to reduce the price of gas.

The next chart is really an historical one. This whole saga begins in 1956 when a geologist of the Shell Oil Company gave a talk to a group of physicians on the 8th day of March in San Antonio, Texas. And he made a prediction which was an audacious prediction then. At that time, the United States was the king of oil. We were producing more oil, using more oil and exporting more oil than any other country in the world. Here we were in 1956. He predicted that just 14 years later, in 1970, the United States would reach its maximum oil production. That was sheer heresy then. Nobody believed him. He was ridiculed. But right on schedule, 14 years later, in 1970, the United States peaked in oil production.

Now he was predicting this for only the lower 48 States, which is shown here, Texas plus the rest of the United States. Then we found a lot of oil in Alaska. We found some oil in the Gulf of Mexico. And we learned more and more how to get oil from natural gas liquids. By 1980, looking back, you can see, gee, M. King Hubbert was really right, wasn't he? We did reach maximum oil production in 1970. I'm going to keep coming back to that.