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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord, by Your power and graceful ways that touch us humanly, create a future of promise for this country. In Congress, create new settings of hope where Your kingdom of realized truth and promised justice may become more apparent in all its saving power.

May the Members of the House of Representatives face the challenges of the present and the future with confidence in You and in the people. Help them, Lord, never to lose heart in the face of resistance, adversity, and scandal. Enable them to overcome every separation between faith and life and reject every false dichotomy of faith and expediency. Thus may they extend Your reign of peace and love and give You glory now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. TAUSCHER). The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without

amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 6040. An act to amend the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 to clarify the authority of the Secretary of the Army to provide reimbursement for travel expenses incurred by members of the Committee on Levee Safety.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 10 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NO NEED TO OPEN NEW AREAS AND NEW LEASES

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. We are going to hear a lot today about the need for new leases. There is no need to open new areas and new leases. Here is Alaska. The former Naval Petroleum Reserve leased by Bill Clinton, authorized by the Republican Congress, has more than 10 billion barrels of oil under it. It is known to exist. The oil industry has the leases; they have drilled 25 wells; they have capped them. They have no plans to connect it to the existing pipeline and bring that oil here to consumers.

But they are saying, no, we want to go over here, we want more leases over here in ANWR. We don't even know if there is any oil under ANWR. How about they deal with the known 10 billion barrels here and provide us some relief at the pump? Then we can talk about other places they might want to go in the future.

NO MORE EXCUSES ENERGY ACT

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, as we approach the Fourth of July holiday, many Americans who would use this long weekend to vacation or to perhaps spend time with their family will have to weigh their options as they struggle with gas prices that have risen to over \$4 a gallon. As the worldwide demand for oil has contributed to the rise in prices that affects families all across America, we have actually restricted our supply here at home. America, unfortunately, has become more dependent than ever on more expensive foreign sources of energy, and not taking advantage of our own energy sources is economic suicide.

That is why I am cosponsoring the No More Excuses Energy Act. It would lift the moratorium on exploring for oil on the Outer Continental Shelf, open up the ANWR in Alaska for natural gas exploration and oil exploration, and it would also provide incentives to build more refineries right here at home.

This legislation would provide incentives and tax credits to assist in researching and in using alternative forms of energy like wind power and nuclear energies. This commonsense approach to energy can help our Nation meet the challenges that we face in the future and can hold down the costs to consumers.

It is time to get to work.

BUSH-CHENEY ADMINISTRATION

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, Members of the House, as American families struggle with the rising cost of energy, as it makes their commute to work even more expensive, as they think about

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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buying home heating oil for this winter, think how it could have been.

Think how their lives would have been different if, for the last 7 years, instead of defending the subsidies for big oil companies, the tax breaks for big oil companies and the royalty holidays for big oil companies, the Bush administration and the Cheney administration had put their heads together and had thought about the future as opposed to the past. But when you have two oil men together in the Oval Office in the White House, they think about the past, and that is protecting the oil companies; it is not about the future.

Think if President Bush had come out for any increase in the mileage standards 7 years ago where we would have been, instead of defending for 32 years the right of the automobile companies to keep us away from more efficient automobiles.

But that would have been the future. The Bush-Cheney administration has never thought about the future; they have only thought about the past, and that has turned out to be terribly, terribly costly to the American consumer.

HEALTHY HOSPITALS ACT

(Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I know much of our concern is on energy and gas prices, but I want to remind Members of some grim statistics on other issues.

If an airplane crashed today and 250 people died, we would send the FAA and every other Federal agency to investigate. If the same thing happened tomorrow, our concerns would escalate, too. If it happened a third day, we would shut down the airline industry. We don't seem to do that same thing, and we have that many deaths each day from infections in hospitals.

In April of 2005, when I first started talking about infections in hospitals, we have had since that time over 6 million cases, over 320,000 deaths, and have wasted \$162 billion. Just in 2008 alone, 969,000 cases, 47,000 deaths, and \$24 billion.

When I introduced my Healthy Hospitals Act, H.R. 1174, the aim was to have hospitals declare their infection rates so people could compare hospitals so we could do something about it.

Hospitals can clean up their act. They can reduce their infections, and Congress needs to make sure there is a law of the land requiring them. People have a right to know if they are going to leave a hospital at all.

IRAQI OIL

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

Mr. KUCINICH. In March of 2001, when the Bush administration began to have secret meetings with the oil com-

pany executives from Exxon, Shell, and BP, spreading maps of Iraqi oil fields on the desk, the price of oil was \$23.96 per barrel, and then there were 63 companies in 30 countries, the U.S. not included, competing for oil contracts with Iraq. Today, the price of oil is \$135.59 per barrel; the U.S. Army is occupying Iraq, and the first Iraq oil contracts will go without competitive bidding—surprise—to Exxon, Shell, and BP.

Iraq has between 200 billion and 300 billion barrels of oil with a market value in the tens of trillions, and our government is trying to force Iraq not only to privatize its oil but to accept a long-term U.S. military presence to guard the oil and to protect the profits of the oil companies while they charge Americans \$4 and \$5 a gallon and while our troops continue dying.

We found the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. We found the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and it is oil. As long as oil companies control our government, Americans will continue to pay, and they will pay with our lives, our fortune, our sacred honor.

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE

(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, the House voted this week on Medicare.

First, let me make one thing clear: We need to pay our doctors. We cannot continue to make it more difficult for doctors to make the decisions to see Medicare patients. A permanent fix is absolutely necessary.

Having said that, the bill we voted on this week took a very short-sighted approach. By cutting the successful and innovative Medicare Advantage program in order to pay for the doctors' payment fix, there will be cuts to Medicare Advantage plans that will reduce access, benefits, and choices for millions of our senior citizens, especially low income seniors and those in rural areas.

We can take care of our doctors without cutting benefits for our seniors, our Nation's senior citizens. The cuts to Medicare Advantage were \$47.5 billion. This would do great damage to an effective aspect of Medicare that serves our senior citizens. We can do better than that.

OPPOSITION TO NEW OFFSHORE DRILLING

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I rise in response to recent calls for new offshore drilling. These arguments for new drilling hit a dry hole for several reasons.

First, we are already drilling offshore. Eighty percent of the known off-

shore reserves are in areas where leasing and drilling is allowed. Today, the oil companies have nearly 6,000 untapped leases in the Gulf of Mexico alone.

Second, with 3 percent of the world's resources and 25 percent of the world's demand, there is no way we are going to just drill our way out of this problem.

Third, even the Bush administration admits consumers would see little savings at the pump from new drilling.

Yesterday, Guy Caruso, head of the Energy Information Agency, said this about the impact of new drilling: "It would be a relatively small effect, because it would take such a long time to bring those supplies on. It doesn't affect prices that much."

Democrats have a better plan. Let's pass legislation that moves America in a new direction on energy by closing the Enron loophole on Wall Street speculators who are driving up prices. Let's reduce mass transit fares and build the infrastructure there, and let's force Big Oil to use it or lose it on drilling permits.

I urge my colleagues to join with me in bringing America to a new, more affordable energy future.

INCREASING AMERICAN JOBS AND ENERGY PRODUCTION RESPONSIBLY

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

Mr. BOUSTANY. My constituents in southwest Louisiana want solutions to the energy crisis.

On Monday, the Lake Charles American Press summed up what is needed in their editorial, something I have advocated for a long time.

They said, "The energy campaign should include more exploration, more refining capacity, more alternative energy sources, more renewable energy, retirement of society's dependency on the internal combustion engine, and an increase in conservation."

"It should not be demagogued, for this is not a Republican or Democrat issue. It is a national issue that will require solutions, not insults hurled across the aisles of Congress and back and forth from Capitol Hill to the White House."

Those that feel the pain of higher energy prices and accompanying higher prices throughout the marketplace—the poor, those on fixed income, even the middle class—are being squeezed."

Increasing responsible energy production is one part of the solution. We must accompany that with conservation, with greater refining capacity and, most importantly, with unleashing individual American genius.

A magic bullet will not lower the price at the pump for American families, but increasing American energy production responsibly will help, and it will create jobs here at home.