

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE ACT

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, last week I traveled across my district to talk about energy and announce my legislation, H.R. 6421, the Energy Independence Act. My district is fed up with what Congress has not done. It is time for us to do something when it comes to investing in domestic energy policy, and my legislation does just that.

Number one, it opens the Outer Continental Shelf to drilling. Two, it creates a tax credit to develop coal-to-liquid fuel technologies and projects. Three, it opens up ANWR and puts regulations and restrictions on it to make sure that ANWR is developed responsibly. Four, it creates an alternative energy trust fund to pay for renewables and alternative energies. And five, it streamlines the licensing process to allow for new nuclear power plants in our country.

Drilling alone will not earn us energy independence, but it is a critical step that we must do coupled with investment in alternative and renewable energies. Let's join together to begin to solve the energy problem in this country. Americans demand it; but more importantly, they deserve it.

BUSH ECONOMY

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

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, the President can no longer deny that the labor market is in recession. June was the sixth straight month of job losses, and this year the economy has lost over half a million jobs in the private sector. We have 8.5 million unemployed Americans, more than at any other time since 2003.

High prices for gasoline and food are squeezing workers' pay. Real wages were lower in June than they have been since September 2006. The recovery rebates have been boosting consumption, and millions will benefit from the extension of unemployment benefits signed into law last week.

Clearly, we must stem the tide of rising job losses. We need a second stimulus package of infrastructure development and fiscal relief for our States.

SUPPORTING COLOMBIA'S
MILITARY FORCES

(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, last week three Americans, along with a dozen Colombian hostages held by FARC terrorists, were rescued by an elite team of Colombian soldiers. Included in the hostages was Ingrid Betancourt, a former candidate

for president of Colombia; and three U.S. contractors, Keith Stansel, Marc Gonsalves, and Thomas Howes.

President Alvaro Uribe, Ambassador Carolina Barco, and the Colombia military are to be commended for this extraordinary and well-planned rescue.

I am grateful for the incredible effort the Colombian government has made to strike back at the FARC terrorist rebels and to bring greater stability and security to their country.

I have visited Colombia, two of my sons were exchange students in Cali, and I know firsthand the hard work necessary to curb the drug trade, terrorist activity, and build Colombia's economy. America has been working to build a stronger strategic partnership with the people of Colombia for economic prosperity, led by U.S. Ambassador William Brownfield.

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

CONGRATULATING TOM POWERS

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

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend, Tom Powers, on his retirement as lieutenant with the Waterloo Fire Department. Tom will be retiring after 28 years of service to the city of Waterloo.

Tom became a Waterloo fire rescue firefighter on November 5, 1979, after serving honorably in the United States Navy, specializing in hydraulic systems on fighter aircraft. Tom was promoted to lieutenant with the Waterloo Fire Department on April 3, 1989. He was a certified EMT and hazmat team member, and received the Mayor's Volunteer Award. He was also selected as the department's Firefighter of the Year in 1986.

Our firefighters represent the very best of our communities, and Tom is no exception. He has worked tirelessly for the safety of our residents, and we honor his bravery here today. Due to his unwavering dedication, he has served, he has helped, he has saved, and he has protected.

I am proud to represent Tom and the city of Waterloo in Congress, and I wish him the best in all of his future endeavors, and ask you to join me today in honoring one of our hometown heroes.

NUCLEAR POWER IS NEEDED

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

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, according to the Energy Information Agency, the United States electricity demand is projected to increase up to 40 percent by the year 2030, and other countries are projecting similar increases. The rapid industrial develop-

ment of both China and India is already placing great pressure on global energy supplies.

Nuclear energy can help meet this growing demand by providing a clean, abundant source of electricity. Other countries seem to understand the potential benefits of nuclear power and have either commenced constructing, or have developed projections for new nuclear power plants. Countries like China, India, and Russia are already building new nuclear power plants. Even smaller countries like Vietnam and countries in the Middle East have begun exploring nuclear power as they too are facing demand shortages and they are feeling the pressures from the industrialized world to reduce CO₂ emissions.

The time has come for all of us to remove regulatory impediments and allow nuclear energy to continue helping this country to meet its growing energy demands.

GETTING BACK TO THE BASICS

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

Mr. KAGEN. Madam Speaker, everywhere in Wisconsin and across the country, people are asking for help to reduce prices for their gasoline costs and their health care. Rural areas, like the district I represent in northeast Wisconsin, are affected most.

We need to work hard here in Congress to provide meaningful solutions to these problems. And our first step must be to solve our health care crisis by ending discrimination in health insurance everywhere; by saying if you are a citizen you are in; and if it is in your body, it should be covered; and by leveraging down insurance costs and creating the largest risk pool possible, and creating an open and transparent medical marketplace.

We must also design for the first time in this administration a meaningful national energy policy which includes three things: drilling for new oil across America with every single ounce of our oil sold only to U.S. citizens; investing in every source of renewable energy possible; and by preventing manipulation in the marketplace.

These efforts will get us back to the basics of becoming energy independent and a healthy Nation once again.

ENERGY AND AMERICAN
AGRICULTURE

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

Mr. LATTA. Madam Speaker, I have the honor of representing the number one agricultural district in Ohio. During the recess, I visited three family farms to find out what issues are on farmers' minds. After speaking with these farmers, they unanimously agreed that the rising cost of energy is

the number one issue facing American agriculture.

Diesel and fertilizer are just two of the petroleum-based products a farmer uses each day. And as the costs of these products rise, their livelihoods continue to be jeopardized.

One beef farmer told me as of right now, he is preparing to lose money on his cattle when they go to slaughter later this year because of the rising cost of oil. He added that he wasn't even sure he would even have a herd next year. All of the farmers agreed that two ways to lower energy prices and reduce our dependence on Middle East oil would be to drill in ANWR and also off the Outer Continental Shelf.

Unless something is done soon, more and more farmers will be forced to make the hard choice of whether or not to continue their livelihood of feeding Americans and the rest of the world.

HONORING JEROME KOHLBERG, JR.

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

Ms. HOOLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor a great American. Jerome Kohlberg, Jr., was born on July 10, 1925. Although he is from New York, his mother was born in Portland, Oregon, and Jerome Kohlberg has always maintained close ties to my State.

Few Americans have been as successful as Jerome Kohlberg, Jr. As a founder of Kohlberg, Kravis & Roberts, one of the world's largest private equity firms, Jerome Kohlberg has been one of this Nation's preeminent financiers for more than four decades.

After service as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, Jerome Kohlberg earned three college degrees under the original GI bill. This past year, Jerome Kohlberg became deeply involved in the fight for a new GI bill for this generation of veterans. He established the Fund For Veterans' Education, a program to provide college funding for returning veterans from all 50 States. His idea—and with the recent passage of the new GI bill, it proved to be a brilliant idea—was to establish a model for what could be done for today's veterans.

He is a role model for all citizens young and old. I am pleased and proud to note the accomplishment of this great American, Jerome Kohlberg, Jr.

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HEROES' HOMECOMING 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, yesterday I introduced H.R. 6446, the Heroes' Homecoming Act, which requires U.S. carriers to do what Congress has asked them to do twice: offer the lowest

available airfare for active duty military trying to return home to their loved ones.

Sometimes active duty servicemembers don't have the luxury of knowing far in advance of when they will be able to leave, oftentimes having less than 24-hours' notice. And purchasing an airline ticket to get home can cost a family a fortune. Our troops deserve better, and Congress has twice asked airlines to give more flexibility for lower airfares for active servicemen and women. I have heard this over and over from soldiers that the airlines are not doing this.

When airlines have come to Congress asking for help with massive bailouts, we helped. Now it's time for airlines to help our most deserving brave men and women who protect our Nation and our Nation's skies.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting our troops and our families by cosponsoring the Heroes' Homecoming Act and help our soldiers get better fares when they're returning home.

THE ROLE IMMIGRANTS HAVE SERVED IN SERVING OUR ARMED FORCES

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

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, immigrants have served in our Armed Forces with courage and dignity since the Revolutionary War. Even today, they continue to defend our country's freedom. They've even earned the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Nation's highest military decoration. For example, Alfred Rascon, an undocumented immigrant during his service in the Vietnam War received the Medal of Honor for his courage and dedication to America.

Immigrants have also reached the highest ranks in the U.S. military. General John Shalikashvili, an immigrant from Poland who came to the United States after World War II, was a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

From 2002 to 2005, over 15,000 immigrants have served in our armed services and later completed their naturalization process. There are thousands of other success stories that we should honor. We cannot ignore these positive contributions and the unique and valuable functions that immigrants perform.

I urge my colleagues to support a comprehensive immigration reform on behalf of those servicemen and women and their families.

CONGRESS NEEDS TO PUT ALL ENERGY OPTIONS ON THE TABLE

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

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, this past weekend I met a single mother in

my South Central Michigan district who drives an hour each way to the hospital where she works. Because of high gas prices, this woman recently requested and received permission to begin working back-to-back 8-hour shifts 2 days per week so she doesn't have to make the hour-long commute each day. Unfortunately, situations like these are becoming more and more common as gas prices continue to rise and congressional leadership continues to resist action.

High gas prices demand action from Congress, and we need to put all energy options on the table. We need more production of American energy, more energy from alternative fuel sources, and increases in innovative solutions like coal-to-liquids technology. Just as with the Manhattan Project or the race to the Moon, breaking our dependence on foreign oil should be a national priority. Unfortunately, House leadership will not even let this House vote on an energy plan that increases American energy production. Important bills like the No More Executions Energy Act are ready to help American families. And my constituents, Madam Speaker, call for a vote on these bills now.

DEMOCRATS ARE URGING THE RELEASE OF OIL FROM THE STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE TO LOWER GAS PRICES

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, with record-high gas prices filling oil companies' wallets with record profits and pinching the wallets of American consumers, why isn't President Bush taking action to bring down prices at the pump now?

Democrats in Congress are urging the President to release oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve which will increase the supply of oil in the market, send a strong message to speculators, and most importantly, reduce gas prices today. This administration has used the Petroleum Reserve in the past, as have the administrations of both President Clinton and President Bush I. The reserve is currently 97 percent full, the highest level ever, with enough oil to meet our national security needs and provide relief at the pump.

So why, when Americans continue to feel the squeeze of devastatingly high gas prices, does the President not take action? Madam Speaker, President Bush continues to talk about new drilling. But his own administration says it can't be done for at least another decade.

Let's provide relief at the pump today by opening up America's Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

GAS PRICES

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address