

ENERGY PLAN NOW

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I have been on the House floor asking the majority party if they've been hearing from the citizens about their financial struggles with high gas prices because I have.

This month, I mailed a survey to families in my district asking for their comments about the energy crisis. I wanted to hear from them about their opinions, their ideas of what we, as Members of Congress, should be doing to ease the high gas prices.

In response to the survey I sent to these citizens, we had tremendous responses: some things like find alternatives to oil; move the country beyond that; we need to support conservative changes in lifestyle; waste less; we have to change; develop new technologies, to get us off oil; drill now; drill everywhere; encourage automakers to make vehicles not powered by gasoline. Yeah. They're right. We need to do it all, and we need to do it now.

Is the majority party not hearing what I'm hearing? Worse, if they are, are they not choosing to help these people and bring energy legislation to the floor?

Mr. Speaker, we need energy legislation on the floor, and we need it now.

THE DRILL ACT PROMOTES DRILLING ON 311 MILLION ACRES OF OPEN LAND

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

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, the Bush-Cheney energy plan is now 95 percent implemented and we are paying for it at the pump. It's no mystery how it happened. Two oilmen in the White House let Big Oil literally write the energy plan. And while Republicans continue to demand opening up more areas for drilling, Democrats are asking why not drill on 311 million acres of Federal land already open for energy production?

Day after day Republicans say drill, drill, drill. But they haven't once asked why oil companies are sitting on 68 million acres of already-leased land.

This country needs a comprehensive plan for energy independence, and responsible drilling is part of that plan. Why not open new areas for development that will save consumers little at the pump decades down the road when there are 68 million acres of land ready for drilling?

Mr. Speaker, Democrats don't want to make the American consumer wait another 10 to 20 years for any relief. Today we hope that the Republicans will join us in demanding that Big Oil start drilling on the leases they already have, otherwise lose the leases. It's time to tell Big Oil, "Use it or lose it."

OFFSHORE EXPLORATION VERSUS LEASES

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week I'm glad that President Bush turned up the heat on Congress when he lifted an executive order barring offshore energy exploration off almost 90 percent of U.S. coastlines.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that raising the decibel level of the debate in this Chamber does not solve the problem. A good, comprehensive, broad-based energy supply is what solves the problem. Instead of acting to help consumers with high gas prices, Congress still has not taken up legislation which will actually help fight rising gas prices even as the price at the pump rockets past \$4.11 a gallon. Instead, we hear the other side of the aisle about use-it-or-lose-it current policy, that oil companies are sitting on 68 million acres, or maybe even more, of land which could be used for energy exploration.

We need to ask ourselves the question then, Why would anyone in the private sector want to engage in even greater expenses than in acquiring more petroleum resources for the American people?

But even a Democratic colleague of mine said, "You can't produce on every acre or even every 100 acres. I think those numbers come from people who don't understand the business."

We can do better; we should do better, Mr. Speaker.

POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I speak on behalf of the 12 to 14 million immigrants here in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the memory of Lance Corporal Jose Gutierrez will always remain in our hearts. Gutierrez, an undocumented immigrant who came here as an orphan from Guatemala, graduated from high school despite many obstacles. While in community college, he enlisted as a marine to show his patriotism and love for this Nation.

On March 31, 2003, Gutierrez became the first combat casualty of the war of Iraq. His belief in the American dream of a better life is a testament of what many others who come to this country wish to have. Gutierrez will forever be a symbol of patriotism, hard work, and commitment.

Sadly, his sacrifices are lost in the hateful anti-immigrant rhetoric. Every day, 12 to 14 million immigrants work from sunset to sundown to reach the American dream—all positively contributing to America's economic health.

I urge my colleagues to keep in mind these contributions and make a firm commitment to work towards comprehensive immigration reforms.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER IN AMERICA AND IN CONGRESS

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, as we did today, 234 years ago Congress heard its first prayer as they opened their Congress. And I wanted to read that prayer this morning because I think it's a prayer for America and this Congress today:

Be Thou present; O God of Wisdom, and direct the councils of this Honorable Assembly. Enable them to settle all things on the best and surest foundations; that the scene of blood may be speedily closed; that Order, Harmony, and Peace may be effectually restored, and Truth, and Justice, Religion, and Piety prevail and flourish among the people. Preserve the health of their bodies and the vigor of their minds. Shower down on them, and the millions they here represent, such temporal blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world, and crown them with everlasting Glory in the world to come. All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ Thy son and Our Savior. Amen.

Mr. Speaker, may prayer always be a part of this body, and may prayer always be a part of America.

JOHN U. LLOYD BEACH STATE PARK

(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. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an area of exceptional natural beauty in my congressional district. The John U. Lloyd Beach State Park was honored on the national news program Good Morning America as one of the four most unique and scenic parks in the entire country.

We're lucky in south Florida to have miles of beautiful coastline, but the John U. Lloyd Beach State Park truly stands out. In addition to sandy beaches, the State park features a coral reef ecosystem just 100 yards offshore and a mangrove swamp with a variety of plant species. Wildlife sightings are common for visitors to the park, and few will forget watching sea turtle hatchlings crawl down the beach.

I would like to commend the hard-working park rangers who care for our State park, as well as Bob and Barbara Magill, who submitted footage of the beach for national recognition.

Mr. Speaker, the John U. Lloyd Beach State Park is truly a national pleasure, and we are committed to preserving this site for future generations to enjoy. We welcome all Americans to come down and visit.