

for graduating classes of 2007–2011. The United States Naval Academy (USNA) is at a close 22.7 percent and has seen a steady and consistent increase in enrollment of minorities well over 20 percent graduating classes of 2007–2011.

The USNA has the highest enrollment number for females (20 percent), with the USAFA close behind—19 percent. USMA has the highest number of African American enrollment, however it is important to note that the enrollment numbers for West Point are about 90–100 students more than the Naval Academy and about the same enrollment numbers for the Air Force.

Current Active Duty Flag Officer statistics throughout the Department of Defense:

- 4-Star Generals, 1 is an African American (General “Kip” Ward)
- 137 3-Star Generals, 8 are African American
- 279 2-Star Generals, 17 are African American
- 444 1-Star Generals, 24 are African American
- TOTAL: 899 General Officers, 40 are African American—4.4 percent of General Officers on Active Duty.

I am also lucky to serve with several Congressional Black Caucus Members that have served in our Armed Forces including:

- CHARLES RANGEL (NY) Served in the Korean War in United States Army during the period of 1948–1952; Purple Heart and Bronze Star Recipient
- JOHN CONYERS Jr. (MI) Served in the United States Army during the Korean War
- BOBBY RUSH (1st IL) Served 5 years in the United States Army
- EDOLPHUS TOWNS (10th NY) United States Army
- ROBERT “BOBBY” SCOTT (3rd VA) United States Army

I am proud to stand here today and honor the many African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Europeans, and all the other ethnic groups that make up our armed forces. No matter their race or national origin they have but three things in common—their desire to champion the ideals of democracy, their willingness to give the ultimate sacrifice for their country, and their compelling devotion to duty.

#### AMERICAN ENERGY SOLUTIONS FOR LOWER GAS PRICES

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, again, we come tonight to talk about something that is on all Americans’ minds tonight, and that is the price of energy. We have been here for the last couple of weeks talking about the problem that we have with the energy prices and especially the price of gasoline in this country. And we are unable to break a deadlock, it seems like, in the House, Mr. Speaker, to have the representatives vote for a bill that would really increase energy production.

And I have got a few charts that I’m going to put up here now. These charts

that I put up just represent a little petition that I had made up for the Members of this body. I had been contacted, as many of you, Mr. Speaker, have heard me say before, that I was contacted by many constituents that asked me if I had signed off the Internet petitions about drill here, drill now, pay less. There have been several petitions about wanting to bring down the price of gas.

In fact, I was in a local service station. I got my gas. I went in to buy some other things. And there was a petition there on the counter. It said, “sign here if you want to lower gas prices.” And I’m assuming the proprietor of that business did that to keep people from hollering at him about how much they were paying for their gas. But after reading this and learning that over about 1.5 million people had signed the petition on the Internet telling Congress, hey, look, we want you to drill here, we want you to drill now, I came up with the idea, Mr. Speaker, that I would come up with a petition for the Members of this body.

We are hearing from our constituents. And right now, about 73 percent of Americans are telling us, drill here. Drill now. We want to lower our gas prices. We want to be more dependent on our own natural resources than we are on foreign resources and be independent of other people to supply us with our energy needs.

So I came up with a petition. It says “American energy solutions for lower gas prices.” It includes bringing on-shore oil online, bringing deep water oil online, and bringing new refineries online. A lot of people, Mr. Speaker, do not realize that we have not built a refinery in this country since 1978. In order to do that, we have got to do something to persuade these refining companies to bring refineries online, to do something to streamline the regulation process and the permitting process to be able to do this.

When the Republicans were in the majority, we did do that. We brought about a bill that offered an opportunity to streamline and to actually put some of these refineries on some of the military bases that were going to be closed. I came up with a petition. I had the petition over here. It is a House of Representatives energy petition. It says “I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans.”

Now that is too simple, Mr. Speaker, for a lot of people in this body, in that it’s one sentence, “I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans.” That’s pretty simple. There’s no discharge petition. There’s no legislation that goes with it, Mr. Speaker. It’s just an opportunity for not only the 435 voting Members of this body, but also the other seven delegates from U.S. territories around the world, to let their constituents know how they feel about increasing U.S. production to lower the gas prices. Well, we have sent at least two

e-mails to everybody’s office. We have talked to probably 230 or 240, maybe 250 people on this floor. So far, we have had 192 Members sign this simple petition. It says, “I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans.”

Now, if you’re sitting at home—Mr. Speaker, if anybody was sitting at home watching TV and wanting to find out if their Congressman had signed, Mr. Speaker, they would go to [house.gov/westmoreland](http://house.gov/westmoreland). And, Mr. Speaker, on this Web site, we have a list of all those Members who have signed. And we have a list of those who have refused to sign. And if your Member is not in either one of those lists, then they have not signed.

So everybody in here has had an opportunity to do this. So far, 192 Members—and as I said, it’s very simple, nothing, no piece of legislation, it’s just a simple comment to the voters at home to let you know how the people in this body, because we are the ones, Mr. Speaker, that are going to have to take some action to make this happen.

Last week the President recalled or withdrew the Presidential ban on offshore drilling. Now, it’s up to this House to do the same thing. We have to withdraw the congressional ban to explore and to do the offshore drilling. But so far, we’ve refused to do that. In fact, every bill that has come to this floor, including the Democrats’ energy bill of January of 2007, has been either under a closed rule or under suspension.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you know that being under suspension, you have no ability to amend the bill, there is 20 minutes of debate normally on each side, probably not even a subcommittee or a committee hearing on the process. So these bills have come with little input from all the Members of this body.

What we have called for, what the Republicans have called for, is for the Democrats to bring a bill to this floor that is an open rule bill. That means a bill, Mr. Speaker, that would allow all 435 Members of this body to put forth ideas, because the total solution is not drilling. The total solution is not conserving. The real solution is all of the above, a complete energy plan that would call for drilling on our Outer Continental Shelf, that would allow us to drill on Federal lands, do coal-to-oil conversion, create oil from the shale in the Western States, wind power, solar power, all of the above.

But so far, the Democratic majority, Mr. Speaker, has refused to allow those type of bills to the floor so everybody can have input. Now, I see here one of my colleagues, the gentleman from California, who just got back from a trip, Mr. Speaker, to some of these regions that we’re talking about. And so I would like for my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY) to get up and maybe tell us a little bit about his trip to some of the area that we believe we have some of the largest oil reserves in this country.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Well, I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I appreciate the work you're doing for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, this last weekend leaving on Friday was a group of Members, one led by Congressman JOHN BOEHNER. And I applaud the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) because his is an open-minded leadership. He believes that the power of the idea should win at the end of the day. So he put together a group of individuals and Members from across the country. There were about ten of us. And we traveled first to Golden, Colorado. And in Golden, Colorado, I don't know, Mr. Speaker, if the American people know, but there is the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. And what this laboratory does, it is under the Department of Energy, it studies solar, wind and many different avenues for renewable energy. When it comes to automobiles, we drove from hydrogen to hybrid to electric cars, as well. This is where the technology, the patents are being created where we can see the future of America, where we can see the future for energy.

And that is much what the gentleman from Georgia was talking about, all of the above. From there after we studied where we can go, but as we studied this technology, and as we drive these cars—one car costs \$1 million and can only go 60 miles—you see that in the future, with technology, where we can go and bring the price down where the average American could actually afford it.

And you do that really by thinking about an individual cell phone. Think about one of those big old bricks you used to have for a cell phone, you would carry them in a suitcase, to where we are today. Many of the Members here actually have Blackberries. Do you know that there is more technology in a Blackberry than the Apollo had when they landed on the moon?

After our meetings in the renewable energy, we then boarded the plane the next day. And we went up to Alaska. We went up to Alaska to look at the Alaskan fields. We went into the different ones to actually see firsthand, not to sit back and say, no, we will never allow the ability to drill, we will never allow it, to understand if we can do it in an environmentally friendly way, to see what is happening up there. We went to the bay. We went up to the pumping of the first transmission line through.

Do you know what we found when we were there? We saw how even technology has changed from when they started in the 1970s to today. Before they would take 65 acres to drill. Now we flew over the one portion which is out over a little ways. Do you know there are no roads? They just put in a landing strip. They only took 6 acres to produce the oil out of it. And you would find that you could mitigate at the same time while you're producing this. We walked up and saw three caribous coming right up to us. So you can

actually have an environmentally sound way and actually produce more oil and actually make America more energy independent.

Now, the one thing I found most interesting in this, if you went to the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, you found in this pipeline it would transport oil produced up in northern Alaska all the way down to Valdez, and it would be shipped down into the lower 48. But the one thing I have found is that in 1989, this pipeline produced 2.2 million barrels of oil a day. Think about that for 1 minute, 2.2 million barrels a day. Today it only produces 720,000 barrels a day because in these fields, as you're bringing it up, every year that nothing happens, you lose 15 percent. And what is going to happen is when this pipeline gets down to 300,000 barrels a day, it will shut down. It has too little to go.

So, as this Congress continues to debate and as this Congress does nothing by not allowing the bills to come forward, we're about ready to lose a national treasure. And the American people have to understand, Mr. Speaker, that they consume 20 million barrels a day and only produce 7 million barrels a day. And as we sat there and looked at the wind and the solar and you talked to the individuals, where is the best place to put up these windmills? Where the wind blows. Where is the best place to put solar? Where the sun shines. Where is the best place to be able to explore and produce more oil? Where the oil is at.

And where the oil happens to be is 75 miles over. Ten billion barrels of oil sitting right there in ANWR. The ability to be able to get it where you have the transmission line to come in. You won't have to wait 10 years as we sat and talked to them. And the environmental footprint would be much smaller than it has ever been in the past. When they were drilling back in the 1970s, they would drill down, and they could not expand very far, so you had to have a numerous amount of wells. Today, the new technology allows one well to go down and go out 8 miles. So you could have fewer wells, fewer roads, mitigate the concerns when it comes to the environment, do it in a friendly, safe manner and at the same time create an energy policy with all the above, to have wind, to have solar, to have hydro, to have nuclear, and also actually produce more. Then what happens? This no longer becomes a red State versus a blue State. This becomes a red, white and blue American energy policy.

And when you think for one moment where the economy is at, \$700 billion a year being shipped over to other countries, of whom we're funding, instead of creating American jobs, and you sit back and you think of this House, Mr. Speaker, you think of this floor. This floor should be created on the concept that the power of the idea wins at the end of the day. But as my good friend from Georgia pointed out, we can't even bring up a bill. We have no appro-

priation bills simply for the fact that the majority party does not want to have an individual to bring up an amendment. Why? Because it would pass on this floor.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, if the gentleman would let me reclaim a little time, you mentioned the appropriations bills, and as the gentleman from California knows, there was an amendment offered by the ranking member of Appropriations, Mr. LEWIS, and when that was offered, that substitute was offered, Mr. OBEY just pulled the bill out of committee and refused to let it be voted on or to at least have a chance of discussion.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. The gentleman is correct. And what did the chairman of Appropriations say? He said there will be no Appropriations bills this year. And then when we get up right before the weekend, the majority party brings up a bill that doesn't produce any more wind, it does not produce any more solar, and it does not produce any more oil or explore any more oil, on suspension simply for the fact that you can't do an amendment.

□ 2115

It is not the masses of the public holding back or the Members having a vote on this, it is the leadership. That's why I go back and I credit, Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership to be open-minded about all forms of energy and not say no, you are going to pick one winner and one loser, it has to be all of the above.

I yield back my time to my good friend from Georgia, and thank him for the work he is doing and letting the American people know the way to go is all of the above.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I thank the gentleman from California for taking time away from his family and actually traveling to ANWR in the Alaska area to see not only what it would do for this country in the production of U.S. oil, but also to create jobs. This is a job creator for Americans, good-paying jobs that they would have and not have to go to Saudi Arabia and other parts of this world to get that kind of employment. They would be able to have it right here in this country.

And now I am joined by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank Mr. WESTMORELAND from Georgia for his leadership on this and so many other issues.

You have a poster down there that talks about American dollars going elsewhere. Have you talked about that poster yet tonight?

Mr. WESTMORELAND. No, sir, I have not.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Why don't you highlight that poster because that talks about the kinds of things that I would like to discuss.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, this is a poster that we have, and this is the poster that really gets my blood

kind of hot, and I think it does for most other Americans, too.

When we realize who we are dependent on, when we talk about being dependent on foreign oil, exactly who are we talking about? I think this poster will give the American people an idea of some of the people we are talking about.

This poster says, America, get out your checkbook. In a recent interview on Al Jazeera, Chavez called for developing nations to unite against U.S. political and economic policies. What can we do regarding the imperialist 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, and this is a quote, "we use oil in our war against neoliberalism."

Here is a picture of Fidel Castro and Mr. Chavez. This is the interesting quote. Or as he has put it on another occasion, and this is Mr. Chavez talking and that was in the Washington Post, "We have invaded the United States but with our oil; not with guns, but with our oil."

And here is the other part that most Americans do not realize, rather than having good-paying American jobs, rather than having the revenue from these oil leases come into this country and come into our pot, our government, our general account, rather than the royalties coming into us and us being able to lower our gas prices for all Americans, we write a check every day and this check is from American families and businesses to Hugo Chavez for \$170,250,000 a day, a day. Not a week, not a month, not a year, \$170,250,000 a day.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for pointing that out.

Now Hugo Chavez is the president of Venezuela, not the president of an American oil company, not the president of a friendly nation, he is the president of Venezuela, and that's what gets my constituents so outraged, and that is instead of taking advantage of the American resources that we have to make American energy, what is this leadership in the House doing? It is forcing us to continue to give millions upon millions upon millions of dollars to folks who don't like us. Incredible.

T. Boone Pickens is doing ads on television right now. He talks about a \$700 billion transfer of wealth every year, \$700 billion from the United States offshore. And much of it to folks that don't like us. And why? Mr. Speaker, why? Because the leadership, the Democrat leadership in the House of Representatives will not even allow a vote on the floor of the House to make it so that we can vote on whether or not we ought to utilize American energy for Americans.

And I know that people get frustrated by talking about the processes. They say you ought not talk about the

process. But in this instance the process is policy. The process is policy.

Here we had a Speaker who came into the majority leadership 18, 19 months ago. And what did she say, she said this was going to be the most open, the most fair, the most equitable Congress in the history of the Nation. And what have we had? We have had the most closed Congress in the lifetime of us sitting here.

We talk about what are called open rules which allow amendments or debate on a specific bill when it comes to the floor. This has been the fewest number of open rules that anybody can remember. It is phenomenal, much more so than what we were criticized for when we had the majority 2 years ago.

But what that failure of process means, what that closure of the process means is that ideas aren't able to be brought to the floor, votes aren't able to be had on bills that the American people care about. And in this instance, it is the American people's pocketbook. It is their livelihood. It is jobs. It is on American energy for Americans that the Speaker of the House will not allow a vote on this floor. It is unconscionable. It is unconscionable. I don't know if most Americans appreciate this is going on.

We believe that the process of bringing American energy to Americans is complex. It takes into account all sorts of different opportunities that we have. Conservation, we all believe in conservation. We are all getting greener.

Alternative fuel, we believe we ought to incentivize the creation of alternative fuel and not make it so that the government is picking the winner in the area of alternative fuel.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. If you remember, and Mr. Speaker, I am sure you remember this, H.R. 6 in January of 2007, which was the Democrat's energy bill, they precluded the American government, our agencies, from using the renewable fuels. And so that is an incredible thing. Part of the solution is going to be using and making these renewable fuels more affordable for all of us. But yet the biggest user of these fuels under section 526 of that bill, we are precluded from even using them.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. It truly is remarkable because that is not what they said. They said we want to be open and we want to do all we can to make certain that the American people have appropriate energy. But when it comes to voting on the floor of the House, Mr. Speaker, they won't allow it. They won't allow it. That's what gets my folks at home upset.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Reclaiming my time, the petition that I had up here, they won't even sign a simple petition that says, "I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans."

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. So all it asks Members of Congress to do is say I will sign a petition that says, "I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans."

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Absolutely. You know, there have been 192 people who have signed it so far. I think six have been from the other side of the aisle, and the rest are Republicans, and there is a list on our Website at westmoreland.house.gov.

To the gentleman from Georgia, let me say, you have talked about process. I have talked about process. We have all come to this floor to talk about the process, and the fact that it is a broken process. The only thing that can come out of a broken process is a flawed product.

Mr. Speaker, we have to have the people of America get involved to help with this. We have to have the people of America engage. They have got to be part of the process, and they are going to have to engage and call their Congressman or Congresswoman to let them know, get out of the fetal position and let's do something.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. And time is of the essence. We are here just this week and next week. After that, Congress goes on vacation. Congress goes on vacation. I have been ranting and raving every time when we close this House each week, usually on a Thursday afternoon at 2:30 or 3, that we are gone for another 3 or 4 days without addressing the major one issue of the American people. So in another week or 10 days, Congress will be gone for a month. And will we have addressed this issue? Not unless the American people stand up and hold Congress accountable, because I can promise you, what my good friends are saying at home is not what they are doing when they come right here.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. You are exactly right.

I wanted to read this one quote, Mr. Speaker, that I think will give the American people an idea of exactly what is going on because back in April of 2006 then minority leader, now Speaker PELOSI made a statement, "Vote for us," the Democrats, "because we have a commonsense plan to bring down the skyrocketing price of gas."

At the time gas was probably \$2.23 a gallon. Right now it is about \$4.08. This was a statement that was made by Mr. KANJORSKI recently when he was campaigning. He was talking to one of his local papers. Here is what he said, and this was in reference to bringing home the troops out of Iraq, but it is just as good a reference to the energy crisis that we have. He said, "We sort of stretched the truth, and the people ate it up." What a comment to make. "We sort of stretched the truth, and the people ate it up."

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the people have chewed on this enough, at least I hope that they have chewed on it enough. Mr. Speaker, if I could speak to the American people, which I know I can't, but if I could, I would say if you've had enough, let your Congressperson know about it, that you are ready to do something. You're

ready for this body, this duly-elected body to put forth a plan to bring down not just the skyrocketing price of gas, but of food. Because as we have made efforts to have biofuels and ethanol, the price of corn has gone up. The price of all petroleum products have gone up. And what we are faced with is a gallon of milk costing more and a loaf of bread costing more, and they sort of stretched the truth. Well, I'm saying they stretched the truth a pretty good ways if they are talking about a commonsense plan to bring down the skyrocketing price of gas.

I see another one of my good colleagues, the gentleman from Marietta, Dr. GINGREY.

Mr. GINGREY. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I am proud to be with my colleagues tonight, and I know a lot of people might wonder, Members of this body, why Congressman WESTMORELAND continues to lead these special orders kind of in the evening, sometimes even later than this hour.

Mr. Speaker, as I think most people understand in this body, we in the minority have no other forum. We have no other opportunity. Bills are brought to this floor under suspension, no amendments can be offered. When bills are brought under regular order, we have a closed rule and amendments are blocked.

The gentleman from Georgia, Dr. PRICE, talked about Congress going on vacation for the whole month of August. So we have this week and next week to get something done. As he points out, by the time we come back after that so-called August recess, we are going to have children, we are going to have our school children in our districts across this country, in my district, the 11th Congressional District of Georgia, walking to school because our school districts are not going to be able to afford the gasoline to put in those great yellow buses that are in our neighborhoods year in and year out.

□ 2130

We are going to be putting our children at risk. We have already talked about the price of groceries, and this is killing our economy. There is no question about it. This is absolutely killing our economy.

My colleague, his petition, a simple petition that he just said, you know, how many are willing? How many Members of this body, Republicans and Democrats, are willing to sign this petition saying that we will support increasing domestic supply so we are not dependent on people like Hugo Chavez and other people in the Middle East, Iran, or Ahmadinejad, these people that absolutely hate us, that hate our way of life, hate our success, and want to bring us down. If we don't do something about it, they are going to bring us down.

So I think Mr. WESTMORELAND mentioned earlier the number of Members

that had signed the petition; I believe he said 192. I think he said that most of those were Republicans; I think there were a number of Democrats. How many Democrats, Mr. WESTMORELAND?

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Six as of now.

Mr. GINGREY. Six. Correct me if I am wrong, but I believe the Democratic majority enjoys a membership of 237, something like that, 237. Out of 237, six of them have signed this petition. Now, I don't know what percentage that is, my math is not that quick, it's pretty low, and you have got 186 Republicans out of about 198. That's a pretty darn high percentage of Republicans. It doesn't really make a lot of sense.

I am going to close my time, and I appreciate the gentleman yielding. Tonight I did one of these tele-town hall meetings where we call into our district. Both of us have done on both sides of the aisle, very popular, a great way to communicate with our constituents. I talked to people in three of my nine counties in northwest Georgia, Carroll, Haralson and Polk, great counties. In fact, Mr. WESTMORELAND and I share Carroll County.

Most of the questions were about energy and why in the world Congress was not doing anything. So why are you all not doing anything?

The final question, the lady said, I don't understand, with the poll numbers across the country, and people wanting us to drill now or drill here, and bring down that price of oil to give us some relief, why is Congress refusing to act?

I said to her, you know, from the political perspective, if somebody on the other side is trying to commit political suicide, well, you know, we stand back and let them do it. But in this instance, we can't afford to let them commit political suicide, because the people are suffering. The people are suffering. Republicans, Democrats and independents, and we need to come together in a bipartisan way and get this done.

As Mr. PRICE said earlier, we have very limited time. I am so thankful to Mr. WESTMORELAND for doing this, for bringing it to the attention of our colleagues. If anybody else happens to be watching out in the country, God bless them, because you need to call your Members of Congress and let them know how you feel.

I yield back to my colleague.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I thank the gentleman. I too did a tele-town hall tonight and talked to about five of my counties.

The last person on the line was a gentleman by the name of Ken. Ken asked me, he said, why can't you all come up with a solution together? Why can't you do that?

I said, Ken, that's a great question, and I tried to answer Ken the best I could, but it was hard to answer it without getting into floor procedures and the parliamentary procedure. Basically what I tried to tell Ken and the

other 500 or so people that were on the call is that, listen, when you have 218 votes in this body, you can do anything you want to do. You can have a good idea. You can have a great idea. You can be 100 percent right in your idea and your thoughts.

But if you don't have 218 votes, you don't have anything. You can't even get it to the floor.

That's what's happened here, even though 73 percent of the American people polled said, look, let's drill here, let's bring down our price of gas, let's become more dependent on our own natural resources rather than giving \$170 million in American jobs to Hugo Chavez, let's invest in our own futures, let's invest in the future of our children and grandchildren.

That's what they are saying. When somebody like Ken asked me that on a call, why can't you get along, we can't even get our point out. As Mr. GINGREY from Georgia said, this is the only way we have got to do it is come to the special orders on the floor of the House and try to convince the American people to get involved.

You know, we are a government of, for and by the people, but if the people aren't engaged in it, then it's not going to work. Seventy-three percent of the American people have answered polls and said, look, let's drill. But, yet, the majority party, who represents probably a little over half of the American people, have said November. But the Republicans, the minority, who represent the other half of the American people, have not had an ability to put their ideas on floor.

We have discharge petitions, and a discharge petition is something if you can come up with 218 signatures, supposedly, it would get to be on the floor. We had one the week of June 9 that said No More Excuses Energy Act of 2007. Reduce the price of gasoline by opening up new American oil refineries, investing in clean energy resources such as wind, nuclear and capture carbon dioxide and making available more home-grown energy through environmentally sensitive exploration or the Arctic energy slope in America's deep-sea energy resources.

Then on the week of June 16 we had another discharge petition, which is over here every day for Members to come sign that says, Expanding American Refining Capabilities on Closed Military Installations, reduces the price of gasoline by streamlining the refinery application process and by requiring the President to open at least three closed military installations for the purpose of siting new and reliable American refineries. We even had that in a motion to recommit that was voted down. But this is over here readily available to be signed every day.

Week of June 23, the repeal of the ban on requiring alternative fuels, as I mentioned before, we have a ban on alternative fuels for our government agencies. It reduces the price of gasoline by allowing the Federal Government to procure advanced alternative

fuels derived from diverse sources such as oil shale, tar sands and coal-to-liquid technology.

The week of July 7, the Coal-to-Liquid Act, reduces the price of gasoline by encouraging the use of clean coal-to-liquid technology, authorizing the Secretary of Energy to enter into loan agreements with coal-to-liquids projects that produce innovative transportation fuel. Take the burden off of aviation fuel, off of our military.

You know what? This creates American jobs. This puts people to work.

The week of July 14, the Fuel Mandate Reduction Act of 2007, reduces the price of gasoline by removing fuel blend requirements and onerous governmental mandates if they contribute to unaffordable gas prices. It's right over here every day for people to sign.

This week, American Energy Independence and Price Reduction Act, reduces the price of gasoline by opening the Arctic energy slope to environmentally sensitive American energy exploration. The development footprint would be limited to one one-hundredth of 1 percent of the refuge. Revenue received from the new leases would be invested in a long-term alternative energy trust fund.

Those are opportunities that each Member of this body and each delegate of the U.S. territories across this world have an opportunity to sign, yet we don't even have the 218 yet. So these are opportunities.

When people go home on these resources, and as my gentleman, my friend from Georgia said, we get out on a Thursday about 2:30 while other people are hard working trying to earn enough money to buy their gas, but let us hear from you. If I could speak to the people, I would tell them, we need your help to move this.

I see the gentlelady from North Carolina, my good friend and classmate that came in at the same time I did, Ms. FOXX.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Congressman WESTMORELAND, it's a treat to be here with these Georgians tonight, I guess we will call it southern night. We certainly do understand each other when we are speaking.

I was pleased to hear Congressman GINGREY saying, quoting his constituents, saying, why won't you all do something about this? Well, I hear that kind of question all the time too. It takes a real practiced tongue to say it the right way too.

But I think it's important, as you are pointing out, that we distinguish who is in charge here. We see a lot of polls being done, and we know that many Americans don't realize that the Democrats are completely in charge of the Congress. Now they want to put the blame for this problem on the President and Vice President, but we know the President and Vice President can't pass laws. It's only the Congress that can do this, and the Democrats are in charge of the Congress.

I was over here several nights last week making that point. I think it is

very, very much up to us to point out to the American people that it's the Democrats who are in charge.

They are the ones who can help solve this situation, but they seem totally out of touch. They don't understand, I think, what is going on at the polls. When you have people in Congress who have been in Congress for over 50 years, and some of their chairmen have been here over 50 years, many of them have been here 40 years, many of them 30 years, I think they are totally out of touch with the American people.

They are not used to buying their own gas, they don't go home on weekends, they don't hear from their constituents in the same way that we do. We know that they are the ones in charge, and they can do something about this. They, again, want to deflect the problem, but we have the statistics on our side, and I think we have to keep reminding the people about that.

When people ask me why, why won't the Congress do something, you know, I don't really have a good answer for them. I am wondering if it's because they are so out of touch, and they don't know how the American people are suffering as a result of the high gas prices. I am not usually a person who thinks in nefarious ways, but I wonder if sometimes they don't want the people to be as miserable as possible, because they think they can blame the President, and they can blame the vice president for what's happening.

That's the only answer I can come up with. I can't really understand why the Democrats, who claim to represent average people, want the average people to suffer the way that they do.

I didn't get a chance to hear all of the comments that my colleague from California, Mr. MCCARTHY said, when he was on the floor earlier, but I do want to put in a plug for our drilling in Alaska, for our drilling wherever we need to.

The Democrats keep saying we can't drill our way out of this. We can't drill our way out of this.

But I do believe, like my Republican colleagues, that it's important that we take advantage of the great gifts that the good Lord has given us in this country to use on our behalf. We have the mechanisms to be energy independent with American-made energy.

I want to point out, again, that even the newspapers are calling on the Congress, but not all of them are pointing out that it's the Democrats, some do. The Las Vegas Review Journal says, "The ball is with Congress, will Democrats continue to block the development of energy resources?"

That is such an important question to ask, and it's important again that every newspaper in this country point out that it is the Democrats that are blocking the development of resources. The Lafayette Daily Advertiser in Louisiana, "Congress should back drilling." Now, the Republicans do back drilling. The Democrats do not.

The Daily Inter Lake in Montana. "Drilling, will Congress ever act?" We

need to point out again that they should be saying, Will the democratically-controlled Congress ever act?

Newspaper after newspaper is coming out and saying that we, Congress, need to act on this. It is not the Republicans who are in charge. The President and the Vice President can't do anything about this. As my colleague from Georgia said earlier, drilling and creating our own energy will create millions of jobs in this country.

Again, the Democrats claim to be the party that wants to create jobs, that wants to help average Americans, but they are standing in the way of doing all of that.

You know, I have jokingly said here that they think they are so powerful that they can repeal the law of supply and demand. Now, that's what they think. They think that just through conservation efforts and just by talking, you know, it's sort of like the Wizard of Oz. There is nothing really behind that screen. They promised us a commonsense plan to bring down the price of gasoline.

□ 2145

The chart that my colleague showed a little while ago, the price of gasoline has almost doubled since the Democrats were in office. I don't know what the American people would have gotten had they made some other kinds of promises, but promising to bring down the price and then doubling the price—you know, I go back to the quote that was used by Mr. KANJORSKI: "We sort of stretched the truth and people ate it up." Well, that is what they are doing now, too, about the leases. They are saying, oh, we don't need to drill. The oil companies have all these leases that they are not using. But I think it is important that we debunk that. We had the Truth Squad last year. We have got to bring the Truth Squad out again.

The oil companies do have some land that has been leased, but the oil companies report to their shareholders they are not going to waste good money drilling where there is no oil or no potential for getting oil. Even the Democrats voted against this ridiculous "Use It Or Lose It" bill that they brought up for the second time last week.

Again, I think we have to remind the American people, we could produce enough energy in this country to become totally energy independent. We need to start now, but we need to remind them, the Democrats are in charge. Call your Democratic Member of Congress if you are represented by a Democrat, and tell them, you want them to drill now. You want them to do all the alternatives.

We Republicans support conservation. We support all of the above. But we can do it. We have always done it. And I now yield back my time to my colleague from Georgia.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I want to thank the gentlelady from North Carolina.

I want to thank the Speaker, too. I didn't realize who the Speaker was until just now. But I want to thank the Speaker for what we did a couple of weeks ago in a 2-hour Special Order where we had bipartisan participation. And I think the American people, Mr. Speaker, enjoyed it. I know that you said you enjoyed it. I enjoyed it, and hopefully we can do that again.

I want to comment, the gentlelady from North Carolina made a comment about the Democratic majority calling on the President to do something. Well, he did do something. He removed the executive ban on drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf, and he called on Congress to do the same thing. We have yet to do that.

But just the mention, just the mention of that, oil went down \$10 a barrel. Then just the mention, the discussion, even though it was more snake oil than anything else, that the majority had last week on a bill that they called DRILL for some reason, oil went down again.

And so I think that, and if you look at the spike in oil prices, and I don't have the chart up here with me tonight. I do have the chart that shows the 12 years of the Republican Congress of gas going from \$1.44 to \$2.10. In the 18 months that the Democrats have been in charge of Congress it has gone from \$2.10 to \$4.11.

Let me give you just a little bit of background about that, because if you look at a chart in May of 2007, the speculation in the oil prices just shot up, and for good reason.

We had an amendment on this floor that Mr.—I believe that was the gentleman from Colorado that said, no more drilling for shale oil. Two trillion barrels. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that is more than Saudi Arabia has in crude oil that we have got in our western States in shale oil, and this Congress, by a very narrow vote, said nope, we are not going to take that out. We are going to leave that two trillion barrels of oil in there.

It was at that time that we saw the spike because what people realized is, hey, look, they are not going to take care of their own resources. They are not going to increase their production. They are going to be dependent on other countries to supply it.

And then, on the reverse, just the mention of drilling dropped the price of oil.

I would like to yield some time to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank my colleague for yielding because the issue of oil shale is, I think, the untold story that is truly one of the secrets to making, allowing America to be energy self-sufficient or even energy-independent.

As you say, the vote was held here on the floor of the House to make it so that America couldn't use its resources.

Some of my friends are fond of saying that America, under this Democrat

leadership, is the only nation on the face of the earth that views its natural resources as an environmental hazard instead of a national asset. It is truly phenomenal.

You mention that the oil shale resources that we have here, in the United States, in the lower 48, would possibly provide two trillion barrels of oil.

Now, we throw around big numbers here in Washington; we are fond of doing that. But what does that mean, two trillion barrels of oil?

It is not only more than the oil that is present in the Middle East. Mr. Speaker, it is more than twice as much as the entire earth has used in the last 150 years. It is more fossil fuel than the earth has used since it began, since man began using fossil fuel for energy. It is an absolute phenomenal amount of natural resource. And the thing that has made it accessible is that we now have technology that is available to utilize it and mine it in a way that is environmentally sensitive and environmentally sound.

But what does this leadership say? What does the Speaker say? Oh, no. Oh, no, we wouldn't want to do that because, as my friend from North Carolina says, we believe that we can actually repeal the law of supply and demand.

Well, I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, what my friends and my constituents at home say. They want to be able to use American energy for Americans. So we have got to conserve. We have got to find that alternative fuel. But in the meantime, in the short-term, in the near term we simply must increase supply, onshore drilling, exploration, offshore deep sea exploration, utilizing oil shale, clean coal technology, making certain that we have enough refineries, more refineries to be able to refine the product that we have, all of those things go into the mix to making it so that America can be energy self-sufficient so that we can bring down that spike in the cost of gasoline at the pumps, and in the cost of home heating oil which is, although it is hot right now, it will be cool relatively soon. And our friends in the Northeast, who are so fond, apparently of this current Democrat majority, with this Speaker and this Democrat majority, they will find out what this leadership has brought them, and it has brought them incredibly skyrocketing prices in the area of home heating fuel.

So I hope that people are paying attention to that as they look at their newspapers and as they look at their ballots, Mr. Speaker, as they evaluate who they believe ought to be leading this Nation.

I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I believe that the commonsense agenda is an agenda that embraces all technologies, embraces all technologies in a way to increase American supply of energy for Americans. We would hope that we would be able to do that in a bipartisan way. Our friends on the

other side though, in terms of the leadership, haven't allowed that to happen. But we look forward to the day when we are able to lead and lead with both Republicans and Democrats to bring together, American energy for Americans and bring down the cost of gasoline for our constituents all across this land.

I want to commend once again my friend from Georgia for his leadership on this and so many issues. I look forward to being with you again.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I want to thank my good friend from Georgia for those comments. And we have all said here tonight, and as Ken asked me, Mr. Speaker, on that teleconference call, why can't you work together?

And Americans all over this country are wondering why, when 73 percent of them say drill here, lower our gas prices, they want to know why. And I want to give just a little insight into why.

I want to read you some quotes, and this quote is from the Sierra Club, and you can go to probably their Web site or at least the FEC reports and see which Members have gotten money from this group. But this is the Sierra Club. "The Sierra Club opposes any general program to lease Federal oil shale reserves for production purposes. The Sierra Club opposes development of the oil resources on the Outer Continental Shelf."

The U.S. has an equivalent of 1.8 trillion, two trillion barrels of oil in the oil reserves.

Greenpeace said this: "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 of our actions in global warming."

Now, keep in mind, when they say let's end fossil fuel use, 85 percent, Mr. Speaker, of U.S. energy consumption is supplied by fossil fuels.

League of Conservation Voters: "Drilling in protected areas offshore won't solve our energy needs in the short-term and in the long-term will increase the threat of global warming."

Natural Resources Defense Council: "Oil and gas production is a dirty process. Drilling in the Arctic refuge would ruin one of America's last wild places. The Arctic refuge is simply too precious to destroy."

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if a lot of Americans have ever seen that Arctic refuge, but it is a frozen tundra. I have never seen a tree on it.

Friends of the Earth: "Even if the burning of coal was not a major greenhouse gas contributor, the coal industry is a disaster when it comes to environmental stewardship and human health."

Center for Biological Diversity: "Oil and gas exploration directly disturbs wildlife, destroys precious habitat, and can result in catastrophic oil spills, as well as dangerous blowouts that kill people, ignite fires and contaminate surface drinking water."



Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the American people, how many of you have heard lately of a catastrophic oil spill? Even with our oil wells with Katrina and Rita, how many of you have heard of dangerous blowouts that kill people? How many of you have heard of these fires being ignited? How many of you heard of the contaminated drinking water from our oil platforms? None.

Mr. Speaker, this is the reason we can't get anything from the Democratic majority, because, Mr. Speaker, these environmental groups are controlling the agenda on this House floor when it comes to the U.S. production of oil. And Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that there is nothing the minority can do about it except stand here and beg the American people to become involved.

H.R. 6, which was the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, that was passed by the Democratic majority, this is the one, the commonsense energy plan to bring down skyrocketing gas prices. And as you saw on my other chart, they have almost doubled.

Here are the words in that 316 page bill. Crude oil was mentioned five times, gasoline 12, exploratory drilling, two, offshore drilling, none, Domestic drilling, none, domestic oil, none, domestic gas, none, domestic fuel, none, domestic petroleum, none, gas price or gas prices, none, common sense, none, light bulb, 350 times.

Mr. Speaker, we called it a no energy plan, and this is a quote from Mr. DeFAZIO about the comments the Republicans made about H.R. 6, the Common Sense Energy Bill. "It is sad to see the Republicans come to this. Now they will laughably say this will lead to higher gas prices."

That was January 18, 2007, when gas was about \$2.10 a gallon. It is now \$4.07.

Mr. Speaker, I beg, I implore the American people to become involved. Go to [house.gov/westmoreland](http://house.gov/westmoreland); find out where your congressman is at. See if they won't have the will to sign that petition to let you know, Mr. Speaker, the constituents of the people elected to this body, that they believe in lowering gas prices for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5501, TOM LANTOS AND HENRY J. HYDE UNITED STATES GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AGAINST HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS, AND MALARIA REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

Mr. WELCH of Vermont (during the Special Order of Mr. WESTMORELAND), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-766) on the resolution (H. Res. 1362) providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 5501) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 to provide as-

sistance to foreign countries to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

#### REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 3221, AMERICAN HOUSING RESCUE AND FORECLOSURE PREVENTION ACT OF 2008

Mr. WELCH of Vermont (during the Special Order of Mr. WESTMORELAND), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-767) on the resolution (H. Res. 1363) providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the House amendments to the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 3221) to provide needed housing reform and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

□ 2200

#### THE MORAL COMPASS OF THE UNITED STATES IN ITS QUEST FOR VICTORY

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the greatest deliberative body the world has ever known—the United States House of Representatives.

I am pleased to be a part of this institution that has elections every 2 years, which requires us to put our fingers on the pulse of the American people. Even though most of us don't like the idea of a 24-24-7 campaign, that being 24 months, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, you set up a perpetual motion machine, and you make sure that the people on your staff and those who are working with you are out there constantly with their fingers on the pulse, listening, talking.

Part of my job is to listen, and part of my job is to project the things that I learn and the things that I know. We have people in this Congress who decide, well, their job is simply to vote the majority opinion of their districts. They don't necessarily consider whether the district is right or wrong as far as the majority is concerned. They just try to put their fingers on the pulse and decide, well, let's see. If 51 percent of the people think this way and if 49 percent of them disagree and think the other way, then if I come down on the side of the 51, then I'll be able to keep coming back here to Congress and sort out the opinions and be, let me say, the barometer of the people in their districts.

Mr. Speaker, I think that's wrong; I think that's narrow, and I think that's

shortsighted, but I do believe we have a responsibility to listen to our constituents. We have a responsibility to listen to the people in our States whether they're in our districts or not. We have a responsibility to listen to the American people across the board.

In the end, each one of us—each of us 435 Members of the House of Representatives and every one of the 100 Senators on the other side of the rotunda—has a responsibility. We owe Americans and especially our constituents our best judgment. That means we listen to the people in the district and across the country. It also means that here we are where we are, in a way, the epicenter of information for the world, where information comes pouring in here, and if I need to find an answer to a question, I ask somebody and the answer comes, and it comes almost always in a form that I can use it and incorporate it into the argument that I'm making and further enlighten.

So we have access to more information here than most people have, at least across the country, and they're out there doing a good job. They're on the Internet, and they're reading, and they're watching the news, and they're thinking and having these conversations across the country. Their conversations help shape the middle of America. If some people weigh in on the right and some people weigh in on the left, it kind of comes out to a balance. It's going to balance. It's a moving fulcrum in the middle.

What we need to do is to take this access to information that we have—and we owe the people in this country our best judgment—and we need to weigh the information. We need to apply our best judgment to the real data that we have, and if we disagree with the majority of our constituents, that doesn't mean that we go vote the way they think we should. We may do so, but we have an obligation to let them know, perhaps, both sides of the argument and to step in and to make the case. Sometimes we're called upon to go back and to inform the people in our districts of the things that we know even though we know very well that they may disagree with our positions.

The first thing we have to do is to do what is right for our country. The second thing we have to do is to do what's right for our States. The third thing we need to do is to do what's right for our constituents. I have said a number of times that, if it's good for America and not good for Mom, I'm sorry, Mom; we're going to find another way to take care of you. My first obligation is not with individuals but with the broader, overall good for the destiny of this country. Often those things come together, and almost always they do.

I actually can't think of a time when I've had to put up a vote that was contrary to the wishes of my district or was contrary to the best interests of my district, but that's where I draw the line—an obligation. I owe the people in this country my best judgment