

Wildlife Refuge, an additional 1.5 million barrels a day; and reduce bureaucratic red tape to construct new oil refineries; and increase the supply of gas at the pump, increase the supply of American-made energy; promote alternative and renewable energy technologies.

As I said, repeal that idiotic section 526 prohibition on government purchases of alternative energy and promote coal-to-liquid technology, shale mining, tar sand production. A lot of the oil that we get from Canada already comes from tar sand, but yet we can't get it right here in the United States of America. It's insanity.

Establish a renewable energy trust fund using the revenues generated by exploration in the OCS and ANWR. What Mr. HALL and Representative WAMP were both talking about is when these States share in the revenue, if they allow this drilling off of their coast, 25, 50, 100 miles out to sea, then the Federal Government also shares in royalties. That money could be spent on research and development for alternative fuels.

Permanently extend tax credits for alternative energy production: wind, solar, hydrogen, biomass. We talked about that earlier.

And eliminate, of course, barriers to the expansion of nuclear power production, which we also discussed.

And then the final chart, improve energy conservation and efficiency. There are a number of things on this chart. I could talk about them real quickly: provide tax incentives for businesses and families that purchase more fuel-efficient vehicles; provide a monetary prize for being the first to develop an economically feasible superfuel-efficient vehicle—JOHN MCCAIN is for that—provide tax incentives for businesses and homeowners who improve their energy efficiency.

So, in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the opportunity, as I say to be here tonight, to talk about these issues, has been a privilege. It indeed has been a privilege, and I want to say to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that we Republicans care about the environment. We care about conservation. We want to reduce greenhouse gases for sure. Some of us believe that there's scientific evidence there that suggests that global warming is a real thing and it's caused by too much greenhouse gas production. But we can take care of that problem without breaking this country, if we do it in the right way.

Right now, first and foremost, it is time to lower the price of gasoline at the pump. We can do it by drilling here, drilling now, and saving money for the American people. We're sent here to represent them. We're not doing a very good job of it. No wonder our approval rating is 9 percent. That's shameful.

Let's stay here through the August recess. You know, if it's a week, if it's two weeks, whatever, let's get this job done for the American people.

AMERICAN ENERGY ACT

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

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address the House and urge my colleagues to allow a vote on the American Energy Act, a bill that was filed today by many of my colleagues, a bill that I think is very important to bringing real solutions to this national energy crisis that our country's facing.

And if you look at what's happening across the country now, you look at the fact that gasoline is over \$4 a gallon; you look at the fact that people are starting to make decisions on whether or not they're even going to take a summer vacation; you look at the fact that this isn't only affecting people at the gasoline pump when they pay a price that's too high, a price that we should not have to afford for gasoline; but the fact that when you go to the grocery store now you're paying higher food costs because the trucking, the transportation of all of our food products are driving up the cost of food; the fact that when you go to a shopping center to buy clothes for children that are going to be going back to school, you're paying more money for those clothes; the fact that many small businesses are starting to have to lay off people or even make decisions on whether or not they're going to be able to make it because they can't pass on these cost increases, this is a crisis that's facing our entire country.

And what's really sad about it, Mr. Speaker, is that we have the ability to do something about it right here in our country. We have American solutions to this American crisis, and there is a long-term and a short-term solution to the problems we're dealing with. And that's why the American Energy Act that we filed today does not just deal with one side of the issue. It deals with all of the above. It deals with a very comprehensive approach to solving this problem that's addressing and facing our entire country.

And so what we're trying to do on the long-term solution is address the alternative fuels issue, to try to explore different methods of providing energy that it's going to take for people to do things that they do in their daily lives.

I was honored to go on the American energy tour, just got back Monday, where over the weekend Leader BOEHNER, as well as about 10 other Members of Congress went first to the National Renewable Energy Lab, and we went and looked at the future of the technologies that are being developed to try to create some alternative sources of energy. And there are some very good alternatives that we are trying to pursue, and in fact, in the American Energy Act that we filed, we support the continued development of these alternative sources of energy because that is our future.

But one of the other things we saw is that those technologies are not on the

ground today for consumers to buy. They're not things that are going to help our consumers, the people across this country, improve their way of life and address the problem of this high cost of gasoline that they're paying.

We looked at things like wind, like solar, like hydropower, like electric cars. You drive an electric car right now—and we test drove an electric car. The capacity on an electric car right now, with all the best technology, you can drive 60 miles, and at the end of those 60 miles, you will run out of electricity in the car. It will take you 6 hours to recharge that battery. Now, I sure hope that we continue to pursue this technology so that someday people can drive 300 miles on that electric car and maybe can recharge it in 15 minutes. But we're just not there today, and we're not going to be there for a few more years according to the experts. So we need to also address, in a comprehensive strategy, the short-term problem.

The short-term problem that's truly leading us to the \$4 a gallon price that we're dealing with, over \$135 a barrel gasoline, is a supply and demand issue. And on the supply and demand issue, you've got a global increase. It's not just American increases in demand; it's a global increase in demand. And yet the supply is flat. And any economist, anybody that's studied Economics 101 can tell you, if you have got demand going this way and supply staying flat, you're going to have an increase in price.

And that's what our country is facing right now, and what we're trying to do with the American Energy Act is say let's deal with the short-term problem as well.

And Mr. Speaker, all we're asking for is a vote, a straight up-or-down vote here on this House floor, on what is the most important issue to our country's economy right now, the issue that's affecting most people in our country.

One of the things we did is we went to Alaska on the American energy tour, and we talked to the people in Alaska. You know, I talked to the Governor of Alaska, and I said what do the people of Alaska think about exploring, opening up some of these moratoriums that Congress has, and exploring our own American energy to make our country more independent of Middle Eastern oil so we don't have to rely and be concerned about what OPEC's going to do. We can solve our own problem with American ingenuity, with American natural resources. And what she told me is about 80 percent of the people in Alaska want to explore for oil right there in Alaska because they understand that this can be done in an environmentally safe way.

And I think that's one of the points that many of the opponents of exploring American sources of energy don't get, the fact that the technologies have advanced so much over the last few decades that in my State in Louisiana, we have extensive drilling. Our State

supplies about 30 percent of the Nation's supply of oil and gas, and we're proud to do it because we know we can do this in an environmentally safe way. And in fact, if you want to go fishing in south Louisiana, you go next to an oil rig because that's the best place to go fishing because the fish actually use that as a sanctuary.

We've got the ability to solve our problem here in this country. All we're asking for is a vote here on this House floor, Mr. Speaker.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

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

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it's an honor to be on the floor. As you know, the 30-Something Working Group has been quite consistent coming to the floor over the years, sharing with the American people and the Members of this House, sharing with them and shedding light on things that we should be working on or things that we have worked on and try to push hopefully for their passage throughout this Congress and to get the President to sign many of these great reforms that we're actually doing now.

Mr. Speaker, it has been quite interesting. I kind of got a false alarm that I needed to be on floor by 10 o'clock because the previous hour was going to end, but I'm kind of glad, Mr. Speaker, that that false alarm was wrong because I had a chance to do something usually I don't do, spend some time here prior to going on the floor. Our schedules are so tight, but I was actually running out to get here, and I'm sitting here and listening to the Members on the other side of the aisle, many of whom I would call colleagues and friends.

But the thing about our democracy is that we can disagree on many issues and we can speak to each other and have debate, and at the same time come together as colleagues towards common change on some issues that we can work together on.

But, as you know, many pages of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD have my words and many words of Mr. ALTMIRE and others that are here in this House in the 30-Something Working Group. I always say that we focus on fact and not fiction, and I could not help but listen to the colleagues on the other side saying they want votes up or down on drilling or they want to conserve or we need to move towards a greener America.

And I lived through the 108th and the 109th Congress under Republican control. Conserve? Green? What's that? Efficiency? What are you talking about? I sit on the Ways and Means Committee, and we spend a lot of time trying to figure out how we could put forth tax credits to Americans who are

looking to turn greener, have greener homes, and to be able to conserve and help us towards trying to push the scientists and industry, pushing them in the direction of alternative fuels so we can invest in the Midwest versus the Middle East.

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I just couldn't help, Mr. ALTMIRE and Members, to listen to some of the Members that went over to ANWR this past weekend.

It's quite interesting, because I took a trip down with the Speaker and several other Members down to Louisiana to fulfill our commitment to the people of the gulf coast that this government will never leave them behind as they were left behind in many areas immediately after the storm, and that's well documented. That's not me talking, you can get on the Internet or you can just remember how folks were stranded there.

Now they are trying to bring their lives back together. I am very, very pleased and encouraged to report to the House, and I know that the Democratic leadership will share, but this was a congressional CODEL. It wasn't just a Democratic CODEL. We had Republican Members at the last minute drop out, some of whom are from Louisiana, whose districts we visited, their constituents, that we were concerned about what they haven't received yet and also looking at what has worked so that we can make sure that the taxpayers' dollars are being spent appropriately.

When we look at the whole issue of the gulf coast and the rebounding of the gulf coast, you can't help but understand the gas down there is like \$3.97. I even found gas there at \$3.89. It was interesting, because the refineries are there, and it's closer for the transportation costs that many of us have to pay in your district and down in my district down in south Florida.

But when we started talking about the solution, toward some of the issues that the Members from the other side were talking about, on the Republican side, I have the names, which I will not call, but 11 Members from the Republican side went on this ANWR trip, went to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. When they were in the majority, they didn't go.

When they had the opportunity to deal with some of these issues, they didn't deal with them. They were too busy, some of them, watching this chart climb to the top, watching these record-breaking profits on behalf of Big Oil.

I don't blame Big Oil, I just blame the old Republican majority for setting the stage and the administration for setting the stage for these record-breaking profits that these oil companies were making or are making. To try to turn this around and to hear now, talking about conserve and all, this has happened under their watch, this perfect storm that they had, both House and Senate and the White House.

I am not going to dwell on that, but I just wanted to bring that chart out one more time, because I think it's very, very important to what we're looking at. Then when I start looking at the Members that went on the trip, the ANWR, quote-unquote, we're going to come up with a solution to bring gas prices down.

On the DRILL Act, which encouraged use it or lose it, which was a Democratic initiative that we had votes on the floor, every last Member that went on that trip voted against that bill. That was about bringing gas prices down now. That was about let's deal with the Strategic Oil Reserve, bring them down now.

Use it or lose it, another piece of legislation, H.R. 6251, every last Member that went on that trip voted no for gas prices to come down, price gouging. Every Member with the exception of two folks that went on that congressional CODEL trip voted "no."

This is the real kicker, H.R. 6049, and the reason why I am calling these House Resolutions out is that I don't want any Member or anyone that can hear me or see me to think that it serves any great pleasure for me to be here on the floor spreading fiction and stretching and embellishing. I don't have to do that. Go to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

H.R. 6049, Renewable Energy Act, every last Member that went on that trip voted no.

So when you start thinking about it and you start hearing what's being said here, that's the reason why I like that we have folks that get all this information, we go back and forth, we meet weekly, and we try to get all this stuff together.

We spend all this time, we come to the floor, I think that's the reason why the 30-Something Working Group has the credibility that we have and have built over the years, because we don't come to the floor for entertainment purposes. We come to the floor because this is serious business. There are people going through heartache and trying to figure out how they are going to get from point A to point B.

We don't have time to say, well, if we could only have a vote. Well, you know something, we're having these votes, and the folks on the other side of the aisle are saying if we could only have a vote, they're just not there.

Energy security, a number of them voted "no." No OPEC price fixing, only five of those individuals out of 11 that went on the trip voted for no price fixing.

So when you look at how you can make this turn, and many of those votes have sent a signal to the White House on some of these votes that he knows that we can't override them, because a number of Republicans have voted on behalf of a philosophy that has allowed Big Oil to make these record-making profits.

So we are going to talk about many things, and I know that we are going to