

banks and caused massive damage in Iowa during this period.

I have gone to every one of the counties. I have seen the damage, from urban areas to rural areas. We have probably close to \$10 billion worth of damage, if not more, in the State of Iowa.

We did get an initial \$2.65 billion package that included Iowa and other States affected by the flooding. But, Madam Speaker, it's time to do more.

It has been 2 months and 5 days since this disaster struck our State. Next month, I have flood assistance meetings set up in all of my flood-related counties, and I am going to do everything I can obviously to help my constituents. I am committed to working every hour of every day to get the necessary assistance to my constituents.

I am, of course, disappointed that this Congress has yet to move forward on a second disaster package, and indeed it looks as though we are not going to move forward before this weekend. That has caused me great disappointment and displeasure. But I am also committed to working with the leadership on both sides of the aisle, and the President, to provide them with any information they need for us to move forward.

As I said before, I am committed to working with my colleagues in the House and in the Senate from Iowa, and others in the Disaster Working Group, which my office helped to create, a bipartisan working group that includes 19 Members of the House of Representatives. I know that, working together, we can provide the relief that Iowa and these other States deserve.

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

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LOWER THE PRICE OF GASOLINE AND OIL

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Well, it's 9 o'clock, it's a Wednesday night, and 2 days from now we will all be home for 5 weeks and Congress will not have acted on many pieces of legislation that deal with the energy crisis. While we are home talking to our constituents and doing things that we have to do back in our districts, the people of the United States of America will continue to pay \$4, \$5 a gallon for gasoline. They will have to take money away from other important areas of their homes; food, clothing, whatever it might be, so they can put enough gasoline in the car to get to and from work or to take the kids to school. I think that is tragic, Madam Speaker.

This Congress should be doing something immediately to lower the price of gasoline and oil. A few days ago, I think last week, the President of the United States removed the executive moratorium on drilling offshore. As soon as he did that, the price of oil per barrel dropped. Likewise, just in the last couple of days, the price of gasoline dropped. If the Congress of the United States were to act likewise to remove the moratorium on drilling offshore on the Continental Shelf, the price of gasoline would drop I believe dramatically in a very short period of time.

But we are not going to do that. We are going to leave here in the next 2 days without doing a darn thing. The American people sit at home, 70, 75 percent of them saying, Why in the world don't you drill? Why don't you drill here in America. Why are you sending all that money overseas, \$700 billion a year to the Saudis and to others who aren't really our best friends? Why not keep that money at home; why not drill here; why not become energy independent so we don't have to worry about the rest of the world and what they are doing. But we are not going to do that.

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We are going to leave here without doing a darn thing. Now, there are a number of bills pending before the Congress that have been introduced that would solve the problem, but none of them have seen the light of day and none are going to see the light of day between now and when we leave.

Today, a bipartisan group headed by NEIL ABERCROMBIE of Hawaii and JOHN PETERSON of Pennsylvania, about 15 or 20 Members, bipartisan, introduced a bill that had a lot of compromises in it that would have dealt with this problem of energy independence and would have helped lower the price of energy and gasoline.

It was a multifaceted bill. It dealt with solar energy. It dealt with wind energy. It dealt with cars that use all kinds of fuel, the hybrid cars, the hydrogen powered cars. It gave tax credits to encourage the people around this country and the industries around this country to move on wind-driven energy and solar energy and other forms of energy that we are not dealing with right now.

In particular, it dealt with the drilling off the continental shelf. It did not talk about ANWR, because that was one of the areas where there was some disagreement. So in order to go ahead and move forward with an energy bill, this bipartisan group decided they wouldn't put the ANWR issue in there, but they would go ahead with the continental shelf exploration. They said that 25 miles off the continental shelf from the shore would not be explored, and 25 to 50 miles offshore the States would have the right to decline to drill should they want to do that.

But it was a giant step forward, and they moved this bill today to the com-

mittees of jurisdiction and we should be acting on that. If we don't act on it between now and when we leave on Friday, we should certainly be acting on it in September.

Now, today we had a vote up or down on whether or not we should adjourn for 5 weeks starting this Friday until September. The vote passed by one vote. Democrats, many Democrats, and almost all the Republicans voted not to leave this body until we dealt with the energy crisis, and it failed by one vote. So the people of this country saw today that a large number of the people in this body that represent them in the Congress want to deal with the energy crisis, but the majority, the Speaker of the House, once again blocked this effort, and I think that is very unfortunate.

It is extremely important that we move on this before we leave in September. The people in this country are going to suffer for another 2 months, and we really need to do something about that before we adjourn for the rest of the year at the end of September, as has been told to us is going to be the case.

We have enough energy in this country to be energy independent. We have enough oil to be energy independent. We have enough gas to be energy independent. We have enough coal shale to be energy independent. We are not doing anything to deal with the problem, and the American people know it.

So I would just like to say tonight, Madam Speaker, before we leave, that this is intolerable, what we are doing. The American people want action. They want the gas prices down, they want the energy prices down, and it is within our power to get the job done, but we are not doing it.

So I would like to urge the leadership in this House, the majority in this House, as well as the minority in this House, to move rapidly; to move rapidly on an energy bill between now and when we leave on September 30th. This is one of the most important issues, it is the most important issue that we are dealing with this session. Madam Speaker, I think it is unconscionable that we have not yet dealt with it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IMMEDIATE RELIEF FROM RISING FUEL PRICES NEEDED

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

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, my constituents in Maine and millions of Americans nationwide face an unprecedented crisis as they agonize over how

they will pay skyrocketing oil bills to keep their homes and their families warm in the winter ahead. Hundreds have written to me with their concerns. I want to share a few e-mails and letters to illustrate the magnitude of this problem.

Amelia from Harrison, Maine, writes: "I am a 16-year-old girl. This summer, instead of being a teenager and having fun, I am staying home to take care of the house because my parents don't have time. My dad works three jobs and my mom works one to pay for the constantly rising prices of gas, food and oil. With my parents working four jobs, you would think we would have enough money to get by. We don't."

Marie from Gorham writes: "I am a single foster parent. I have two daughters with special needs. I am worried sick on how I am going to be able to pay \$500 or more every 3 to 4 weeks to heat my home. I can't look my foster daughters in their eyes and tell them I can't afford to keep them. We are their family."

Michael from Topsham wrote on behalf of his 87-year old father-in-law, who lives alone Auburn, Maine: "Last year his oil fuel cost was approximately \$6,400. He is a retired Army Reserve Master Sergeant with 20 years of service. His annual expenditure for fuel oil this year would likely be \$10,200. This would consume 85 percent of his annual income of \$12,000. Our elderly American citizens will be unable to financially manage these costs. Our government needs to intervene and help our elderly citizens during this unprecedented fuel crisis."

Marie, Amelia and Michael's stories are just a few examples of the human toll from soaring heating oil prices. More than 8 in 10 Mainers rely on oil to heat their homes. The average Maine household uses between 800 and 1,000 gallons of heating oil a winter. The median home income in Maine is \$43,000. At current prices, the average home will pay between \$3,700 and \$4,700 just to heat their homes. Many will spend more than \$5,000. This is more than 10 percent of the gross income for the median income household in 5 months. Coupled with soaring costs for gasoline, food and other essentials, people worry they may have to choose between heating their homes and feeding their families.

Madam Speaker, this Congress must act now before the winter freeze sets in. We need a new comprehensive energy policy to free ourselves from foreign oil. The people in Maine and America are suffering right now, and we need to provide them with immediate relief in the short term to help them get through the winter.

I have a plan to do just that. First, we must fully fund the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, LIHEAP, and weatherization programs to help the poor, the disabled and the elderly on fixed income.

Second, we must provide relief for middle-class families fighting to make ends meet.

Last week, Carolyn McCarthy of New York and I introduced H.R. 6605, the Home Heating Fuels Cost Relief Act. Our legislation would provide a \$1,000 refundable tax credit for individuals, \$2,000 for families, toward the price of home heating oil, as well as a program to provide up to \$10,000 in low interest loans for families to weatherize their homes.

Third, soaring gas prices and heating oil prices are crippling small businesses like independent truckers and lobstermen. These businesses are the backbone of the Maine economy. I have introduced H.R. 2133, the Small Business Fuel Cost Relief Act, to create a tax credit for eligible businesses for any amount they spend on fuel, including gasoline, diesel, natural gas and heating oil, over the price on Labor Day 2004, adjusted for inflation.

Madam Speaker, families and small businesses in Maine and across America work hard for the money they spend on fuel. They deserve leadership in Washington that will act now to bring immediate relief from rising gasoline and heating fuel prices.

They also demand leadership to change direction and implement an energy policy that harnesses American ingenuity and entrepreneurship to reduce dependence on foreign oil, maximize conservation and efficiency, perfect alternative fuels and technologies, create jobs, and put America on the path to sustainable, affordable energy future. That is the task this Congress faces.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. RICHARDSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CALVERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TRIBUTE TO SISTER LULA WALKER, FOUNDER OF TABITHA HOUSE SHELTER FOR BATTERED WOMEN AND CHILDREN

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of the most caring, most willing to share, most sensitive and most delightful ladies that I have ever known. Sister Lula Walker was a rock in her family, in her church, in her community, in her city, and in her country. She was a deeply religious lady, highly motivated, willing to sacrifice, and fiercely determined. She did not know how to retreat, and she did not know how to take "no" for an answer.

Raised in a Christian home, she met and married her husband, Reverend Willie Walker, a Christian man who is an ordained elder in the Church of God in Christ Church. Together Sister

Walker, her husband Reverend Willie and their children have built a legacy of living and giving which will rarely be surpassed.

With little money and no public support, Sister Lula organized a ministry of providing for battered women and children. She named it Tabitha House, after the disciple Tabitha in Hebrew, or Dorcas in Greek. Tabitha was known for her good works, especially for helping widows and the poor.

Through her good works at Tabitha and in other ways, Sister Lula became the Mother Teresa of our community. Her work became so famous and well-known that she was invited to come to Washington D.C. and testify before Congress on the plight of women and children who are homeless and in need of shelter.

Sister Walker had several bouts of serious illness, but like Tabitha, or Dorcas, she was able to rise up and continue with her work. Finally, on Saturday, July 19th, 2008, Sister Lula could not rise anymore and graciously passed out of this life into another.

So, Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to extend to Reverend Willie Walker and the Walker family, the Tabitha House family and the Church of God in Christ church family our heartfelt condolences and the great joy that I have experienced as a result of knowing and working with the Mother Teresa of our community, the neighborhood where I live, Sister Lula Walker.

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

(Mr. McDERMOTT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. CULBERSON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. WELLER of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)