

Church, is located in the Fifth District of Virginia. His predecessor, Dr. Don Davidson, in the last Congress delivered an opening prayer. And Mount Hermon Baptist Church served as the host church for the memorial services of my predecessor in Congress, the late Dan Daniel, 20 years ago.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the measure passed yesterday for the Commonwealth of Virginia was a hoax and a sham. It provides no funds for the Commonwealth, for its offshore natural gas and its offshore crude oil. I have talked with members of the General Assembly. They will be very reluctant to adopt any drill policy when they are not treated the same as Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. We need to be fair to encourage drilling.

#### FLAGS OVER MANTECA, CALIFORNIA

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

Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the dedication of so many volunteers who eight times a year line the streets of Manteca, California, with 2,400 flags in a stunning display of patriotism. Flags Over Manteca began after September 11 to recognize those who lost their lives on that day and all Americans who have sacrificed in service to our country.

Each morning on days of remembrance during the year, volunteers and service groups place flags along eight miles of Manteca's main roads to celebrate our country's heroes. Coordinating it all is the Manteca Chamber of Commerce and volunteer Les Thomas who arrives early to ensure that everyone knows what to do. He is there at the end of the day to receive all 2,400 flags and carefully pack them away until the next holiday.

The event has become so meaningful that volunteers arrive at 4:30 in the morning to have the privilege of placing flags in honor of those who will not be forgotten.

Today I commend all those who make Flags Over Manteca work. I hope it continues to memorialize the sacrifices of our Nation's heroes.

#### A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

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

Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we had a great opportunity to put forward a bipartisan approach to solve this Nation's energy problems. Unfortunately, we didn't do that. We had a bill that arrived at the last minute to us with very little time to look over and no attempt to make sure that it included the best ideas on how to solve this Nation's energy problems.

That opportunity was bypassed, and what we ended up with was a very narrowly banded bill that will not address this Nation's energy problems.

That is reprehensible. We need to make sure that we have that opportunity. We have a bill that passed out of here yesterday that has already been said by Democrats in the Senate that it's dead on arrival and that it's going to be vetoed by the President.

Why didn't this body take the opportunity to make sure that we adopted an energy policy that was going to be in the best long-term interest to this Nation, that had a chance of passing and that had a chance of making a difference in the gas prices of our men and women out there that their families have to deal with each and every day? That is reprehensible. We had a great opportunity yesterday that we missed, that we did not take advantage of, Mr. Speaker, and I tell you this Nation will suffer for it.

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#### DEMOCRATS WANT TO JUMP START THIS ECONOMY BY PASS- ING A NEW ECONOMIC RECOVER- ERY PLAN

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

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, the crisis on Wall Street impacts Americans across the country. In the coming days, House Democrats will continue our efforts to revive the economy and end the free for all on Wall Street and restore confidence on Main Street.

Democrats have restored the kind of oversight that was missing under President Bush and the Republican Congress. The GOP decision to turn a blind eye to financial markets helped pave the way for the financial crisis that has brought down home values across the country and has significantly weakened our economy. Democrats have and will continue to do things differently.

This month, Democrats will work to enact a second economic recovery package that will help Americans who have lost their jobs or who are barely making ends meet, and they will create good-paying jobs. That's what we need in our flood-ravaged communities in Iowa.

Mr. Speaker, these Bush-McCain economic policies have put America in an economic hole. This month, Republicans will again have a clear choice. Stand with the Bush-McCain plan for more of the same or take action to aid families who are struggling.

#### HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 417

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

Mr. McCOTTER. I've long thought that civics should be taught as earnestly as possible in our schools.

Yesterday, we saw the spectacle of a Democratic House sham energy bill being passed out of here and lauded as if the problem had been solved. The problem is no one had consulted with the Democratic Senate, which had declared it dead on arrival.

Now, for a bill to become law, it must pass both Chambers and be signed by the President of the United States. Only in that way can meaningful American energy security and independence be secured. That is why I have introduced House Concurrent Resolution 417 that says that it is the sense of this Congress that we will not adjourn until meaningful energy legislation has been passed into law to help the American people through this difficult time.

Now, again, I have to do this because there seem to be some who think that simply passing a sham energy bill for political cover out of this body is going to help any American struggling at the pump. It will not. Let them put your money where their mouth is and stay here until they get the job done.

#### IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I'm here on behalf of immigrant families who otherwise would not have a voice. There are those who insist that undocumented immigrants have broken the law, that they are criminals, but what image do you get when you hear that someone is a criminal? Your image is of a murderer, of a thief, of a drug dealer, of someone who intensely wants to hurt another person.

These families who are wrongly called "criminals" come to the United States without the intent to hurt anyone. Yet there are anti-immigrant attacks that continue to say otherwise. What happened to the Ten Commandments? to love thy neighbor?

There are those who say that these families should play by the rules. The rules now are to form a line and to wait many years and to pay a huge fine, but the reality is the immigration process is so complicated that some of us would have a difficult time getting through it. We need comprehensive immigration reform to address the 12 to 14 million people in the United States to play by the rules and to also fix this broken system.

I urge my colleagues to support comprehensive immigration.

#### UNFAIR AND UNBALANCED TRADE DEALS

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, in Wisconsin and throughout the Nation,

manufacturing has been the backbone of our economy and of our communities, but during the past decade, we've seen many of our jobs being shipped overseas, not because we are not hardworking and not because we are not producing high-quality products but, rather, because of unfair and unbalanced trade deals.

The free enterprise system depends upon working Americans having a competitive workforce and productive employees. These are vital to the success of every business be it large or small.

Congress will soon vote on an economic stimulus package that contains \$500 million for worker and job training assistance. Included in that legislation is a piece that I had the opportunity to write, entitled the "Incumbent Worker Development Act." This legislation will guarantee that States and Federal Governments work together to train our workers.

This is not a time for ideology. This is a time for action, and I encourage all of us to vote for this stimulus package.

#### REPUBLICANS CLAIM THEY WANT ALL OF THE ABOVE BUT HAVE DONE NOTHING TO LOWER GAS PRICES

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

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, both Democrats and Republicans have been talking about high gas prices for months. At first, Republicans said we just needed to drill, drill, drill, but then they joined us in saying that a more comprehensive, all-of-the-above proposal was in order. It turns out it was just all talk.

Democrats have been trying to reverse the failed Bush policies of the past, but Republicans keep saying no. We proposed legislation to crack down on price gouging and to curb excess speculation. Republicans said no. We proposed lowering gas prices immediately by tapping the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Republicans said no. We proposed legislation that would force Big Oil to drill on 68 million acres of land to increase oil production here at home. Republicans again said no.

Yesterday, we passed an all-of-the-above energy package to bring down prices and to invest in America's energy future, but again, Republicans voted no.

Mr. Speaker, it seems like Republicans don't actually want to resolve the crisis. They just want to talk about the crisis.

#### REPUBLICANS ARE STILL JUST TALKING

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, for 6 years, the Republicans had control of Congress and of the White House, and for 6 years, the American people waited

for them to do something to end our dependence on foreign oil, but despite their constant cry of "drill, baby, drill," the Republicans didn't act on this issue when they had control, and 2 years ago, the American people voted for new leadership in Congress.

Well, yesterday, that new leadership—the Democrats in this House—answered the call by passing a landmark energy bill that triples the available territory for offshore drilling. Let me repeat that. The bill we passed yesterday triples the amount of territory in the Outer Continental Shelf that is available for drilling.

Predictably, many in the minority demonstrated by their votes that they're more interested in having a political issue for the coming election than they are in actually solving the problem. While Democrats have taken decisive action by passing a comprehensive energy bill that includes an unprecedented expansion of offshore drilling, Republicans, as you will hear today, are still just talking.

#### MCCAIN'S ASSESSMENT OF THE ECONOMY SHOWS THAT HE REALLY IS NOT AN EXPERT ON THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, in December, Senator MCCAIN admitted that he is not an economic expert when he stated "The issue of economics is not something I've understood as well as I should." He went on to say, though, that he had Alan Greenspan's book. Well, clearly, Senator MCCAIN should listen to Greenspan, who called this week's financial news a once-in-a-century type of financial crisis. Unfortunately, Senator MCCAIN was not listening because his response to the catastrophic economic events of this week was "the fundamentals of our economy are strong," and he called for the oldest, lamest Washington trick in the book—the creation of a study commission.

We don't need a commission to know that 600,000 Americans have lost their jobs in the last year, that the median income for working Americans has fallen over \$2,000 a year over the last 8 years. Those are not strong fundamentals.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when every economic expert agrees that our economy is in crisis, we need someone in the White House who is ready and willing to act now to fix it, and clearly, that person is not Senator MCCAIN.

#### IT IS TIME FOR A CHANGE IN THE POLICIES OF THIS NATION

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, this country was really founded upon

sacrifice, investment and opportunity for all, but over the last few years, we've seen the focus being on the wealthiest 1 percent in America to the exclusion of the rest of us, and that House of cards has come tumbling down on Wall Street over the last couple of weeks with the failures of the biggest corporations in America.

The policies of this administration not to regulate and the policies to only borrow and spend are causing this country turmoil, and the hardworking people in the middle are going to have to pick up the pieces. It is time for renewal. It is time for a change. The policies of the Democrats and of BARACK OBAMA are going to change the direction of this Nation and make it stronger and make it the Nation that it can be.

#### THE TROUBLED STATE OF THE AMERICAN ECONOMY

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

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, the last few days have clearly demonstrated that the troubled state that our economy is in is more serious than we thought. The Bush administration's mismanagement of the American economy has officially caused a housing crisis to snowball and jeopardize the entire economy.

Lehman Brothers and Merrill Lynch, established companies that survived the Great Depression, have declared bankruptcy or have been sold off to survive. Both companies employ thousands of people from my district, the 19th District of New York, and no one seems to know what will happen to these workers or to their families.

But it's not just Wall Street suffering. Wages have stagnated; expenses continue to rise. American families can no longer afford to buy necessities, much less to invest in the future.

Mr. Speaker, when President Bush took office 8 years ago, he inherited a flourishing economy and a record budget surplus. Now, as he leaves office 8 years later with 8 years of misrule and a lack of oversight, those days are clearly gone.

I hope we make the right choice for our next President and elect BARACK OBAMA, who will understand how to deal with the complexities of our economic situation.

#### PASSING A COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY BILL

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

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the House of Representatives passed a comprehensive energy bill, regrettably with almost undivided Republican opposition. That was disappointing because we had a chance to