

Sammie Phillips did not return with them. At Sammie's funeral at the Stithon Baptist Church in Radcliff, 3,000 people turned out to pay their respects to the boy with the big smile. Sammie's mother, Rachel Crutcher, wrote a letter to her son that said:

I know you're in heaven saying, "Momma, don't cry."

Rachel says:

He was someone special, and I knew . . . that he'd be an inspiration to everyone he came in contact with.

Madam President, our prayers are for the Phillips family for their terrible loss. We are thinking of Sammie's wife, Ashley Phillips; his mother, Rachel Crutcher; his stepfather, Donny Crutcher; his father, Ronald Phillips; his sister, Cassandra Phillips; his brother, Logan Crutcher; his grandfather, Ted Stiles; and many more beloved family members and friends.

Madam President, Ashley tells us that her Sammie was proud of his service. He told his mom that if he were to die while wearing his country's uniform, "everyone was going to know who he was."

Well, this U.S. Senate knows, and we certainly will not forget PFC Sammie E. Phillips's service and sacrifice. We honor the life of this dedicated man, soldier, and patriot, and stand in awe of devotion like his that continues to keep our Nation safe and free.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

PARTICIPATING IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, we have a very busy week ahead of us. I have announced some of the work we are going to do, but we really do have a lot to do. I look forward to this being a very productive week. I hope things work out as well as I anticipate.

Madam President—I am sorry that I referred to you as "Mr. President." That is pretty standard when you just have—as I mentioned last week, we sure have a lot more women than when I first came here. When I came here, we had Senator MIKULSKI. Now, on this side alone, we have 11 Democratic women, which has made the Senate a much better place.

Madam President, as Senators OBAMA, REED, and HAGEL travel through Iraq today, there is one conclusion they will undoubtedly all reach: our troops—about 150,000 strong—have done a remarkable, heroic job under nearly impossible circumstances.

This war has been going on for a long time—more than 6 years—approaching about \$1 trillion having been spent. Today, we are spending \$5,000 a second in Iraq. We have more than 3,000 double-amputees. We have a significant number of returning veterans who are blind, paralyzed, and, of course, the

traumatic head injuries they have had have been significant. It will be a legacy of this country for a long time to pay for all that. But because of the valor of these troops and their sacrifice, a war that was irresponsibly planned and incompetently waged by President Bush has now shown signs of improvement, and that is good. Neither Democrats nor Republicans can take any credit for that. Every ounce of credit goes to our men and women in uniform, and we are grateful to them beyond words to describe.

It would be impossible to fully repay our troops for the sacrifice they and their families have made. But this Congress took a historic step forward—over the President's objection and over Senator MCCAIN's statement that the bill was too generous—and we passed, in spite of MCCAIN's objection and the President's objection, a new GI bill of rights—the largest expansion of veterans' benefits since the original GI bill after World War II.

As Senator OBAMA visits Iraq to listen to our troops and commanders and meet with Iraqi leaders, it is becoming clear that America, Iraq, and the world are coalescing around Senator OBAMA's plan to end the war.

I spoke yesterday to someone I know very well. He has had three tours of duty in Iraq.

I said: James, what do you think of Senator OBAMA going to Iraq?

He said: The troops love him.

For someone who has had three tours of duty in Iraq, I think he has the credentials to say that.

That plan sets a responsible timeline for redeploying American combat brigades, transitions the responsibility for securing Iraq to the Iraqis—as Senator LEVIN has said for many years: Take the training wheels off and let them run their own country. It restores America's military readiness. Right now, because of this long war, our military is in very difficult shape. Estimates of bringing the military to what it was before the war started is now approaching at least \$150 billion. Finally, it takes the fight to America's No. 1 enemy, Osama bin Laden.

This weekend, Prime Minister Al-Maliki spoke in favor of the Obama plan. Today, despite pressure from the White House, Iraqi Government officials publicly reiterated their support. They want us out of their country. If you take a poll—and there have been many taken—80 percent of the Iraqis want us out of that country. They have suffered significantly during this war.

We are all glad Saddam Hussein is gone. But they do not know definitely the number of Iraqis who have been killed. There are wide-ranging estimates from 150,000 to 600,000. We know that millions have been displaced. There are 2 million out of the country. There are a million and a half wandering around inside of Iraq who are displaced.

The American people have known for years that our national security inter-

ests require us to carefully bring our troops home and call on the Iraqi people to take the reins of their own sovereign nation. The vast majority of Iraqis, I repeat, are eager for the day to come when they control their own destiny. They are ready for the war to responsibly draw to a close.

Even President Bush—even President Bush—who bears the primary responsibility for this incompetently managed war, is now belatedly and gradually moving toward some elements of key Democratic positions on Iran, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The President has labeled his new position for Iraq a "time horizon." Try to figure out what that means. We don't know. But at least he is recognizing there must be some timeline set. No one knows yet what a "time horizon" actually means, and it is clear that President Bush has no plans to draw down the war before he packs his bags in January. This critical national security decision will fall to the next President.

While it is becoming increasingly clear that the American people and Iraqi leaders strongly support the Obama plan to bring our troops home, Senator MCCAIN is stubbornly clinging to his open-ended commitment to endless war.

Senator MCCAIN has called upon Senator OBAMA to listen to our troops and commanders in Iraq. He criticizes Senator OBAMA for not going to Iraq again. And he criticized Senator OBAMA for going to Iraq. Senator OBAMA is, though, listening to our troops and commanders, and it is clearer than ever that his position was right from the beginning.

Now it is time for Senator MCCAIN to listen to the American people. If he does, he will discover a nation desperate for a responsible path out of Iraq. If Senator MCCAIN fails to join the chorus of calls for a responsible path out of Iraq, the choice in November will be even more clear than it is now.

Madam President, I want to talk about energy speculation, about energy generally.

This weekend, Senator MURRAY delivered the weekly Democratic radio address. In her remarks, the Senator from Washington said that her last gas fill-up in the State of Washington was \$4.35 a gallon. Nevada is not far behind.

I have spoken on the floor about gas prices on countless occasions, and each time the crisis has grown worse. Last month, we heard from a public school teacher, who gave the Democratic response to President Bush, a teacher in Auburn, NY, who has had to spend all the money he and his wife used to save for their children's college tuition on gasoline. All across our country, billions and billions of dollars that rightfully belong in the pockets and savings of American families are being funneled instead to oil companies and oil-producing countries. That diversion of savings from American families to foreign governments and oil companies is nothing short of a national crisis.

When our country is in a crisis, Congress must be ready to take action. We Democrats in Congress, working with Senator OBAMA, have tried to take action again and again. We have proposed both long- and short-term solutions—short-term solutions to bring down gas prices now and long-term solutions to attack the root of the problem: our growing addiction to oil.

We had something called the Energy First Act. It would end the billions of dollars in tax breaks for big oil companies whose executives have been hauling in record profits while we pay record prices. Last year, the oil companies made \$250 billion net.

Second, in that piece of legislation, we would force the oil companies to do their part by investing some of their profits in clean and affordable alternative energy—the Sun, the wind, geothermal, biofuels.

Third, we protect in that legislation the American people from price gougers and greedy oil traders who manipulate the market.

We also, in that legislation, among others things, stand up to OPEC and countries that are colluding to keep oil prices high.

One of my friends is a foremost antitrust lawyer in America. His name is Joe Alioto, Jr. He has painted the picture very clearly that there is a conspiracy going on. We have a bipartisan approach to that. Senator KOHL of Wisconsin and Senator SPECTER of Pennsylvania have joined to have OPEC subject to American antitrust laws.

Of course, we have been blocked on all four of these issues by the Republicans.

We have found with our efforts to do something about these energy prices that the Republicans have not been willing to participate in the legislative process. They have taken their cues from President Bush and, of course, from Senator MCCAIN that the solution to gas and oil prices starts and ends with more offshore drilling. Democrats have made it clear that we support more domestic production.

We have, counting ANWR and all the offshore potential that exists, less than 3 percent of the oil in the world. We use more than 25 percent of the oil in the world every day. So there is no question domestic production is part of the answer, but it is only one part of the answer. The minority would like us to believe that the moment we open more of our coast to the oil companies, gas prices will come tumbling down.

Less than 2 years ago, here in the Senate, we passed a bill that was signed by the President. We were told by the oil companies and others that if we opened the Gulf of Mexico to more drilling, it would really be good for our economy, good for oil production. But we allowed 8.3 million more acres in the Gulf of Mexico to be drilled, and here it is, almost 2 years since we passed that legislation, and not a single drill bit has been placed in that water.

So it seems to be kind of a hollow cry to say we need more places to drill when they have not used the places we gave them to drill. Sixty-eight million acres they have, and they have 8.3 million acres we gave them less than 2 years ago that they have not touched.

The truth is, it would take years—and even decades—for offshore oil to be explored, drilled, and distributed. Just to set up an oil rig would take more than 2 years. Equipment is not available. So in the short term, drilling would do absolutely nothing.

We have expressed our willingness to consider more drilling as part of any comprehensive short- and long-term package, but Republicans so far have not been willing to entertain other solutions.

We will begin this week by working on legislation that would have an immediate impact on gas prices. I heard my friend, the Republican leader, say: Well, speculation is not such a big deal. I do not think it is just fortuitous that once we started talking about doing something about speculation, the price of oil dropped. I think this speculation is way out of hand, and I am not the only one who feels that way.

We need legislation to rein in Wall Street traders who are unfairly driving up oil prices. These traders have no regard for the well-being of American families. The only thing they care about are their own profits. Prior to 2000, you could not speculate in oil. It was not allowed. But a Republican Congress led the charge, and now you can speculate in oil even if you are not going to use that oil. The only thing, it seems to me, that these speculators care about is how much money they can make, which they secure by bidding up the price of oil, buying huge quantities just to sell it at an even higher price. They have no plan to actually use the oil they buy. All they want to do is buy, sell, and repeat, leaving American families to pay the bill.

Now, there are wide-ranging suggestions as to how much this is. Twenty to fifty percent of the cost of oil is in speculation. Not all speculation is bad. Sometimes it helps the market determine a fair price for a commodity. Speculation in the oil market has gone on throughout the Bush administration with virtually no oversight, and it truly has gotten out of hand. Experts say this speculation is responsible, as I have indicated, for 20 percent—up to as much as 50 percent—of the price we pay at the pump. These are figures with actual people making those suggestions and those calculations: Academics, economists, and people who used to work for the Commodities Futures Trading Commission.

Democrats have proposed legislation—the Stop Excessive Energy Speculation Act—that would set a fair amount of oversight on this out-of-control trading. The Republicans have said in speeches and press conferences that they agree with us that speculation is

a problem. They have kind of now backtracked and said it is a problem but not a big problem. I assume they have been getting a lot of calls from Wall Street, as have we, but we are not going to be intimidated by them. We believe they are part of the problem, and we need to do something to make them a part of the solution.

To show that the Republicans believe that speculation is important, the bill they have before this body has a provision in it dealing with speculation. I would hope they would look at our speculation bill and join us. If there is something wrong with it, we are happy to take a look at any reasonable suggestion that would make it a better piece of legislation. It stands to reason this would be a chance for Democrats and Republicans to work together. So far, however, we have seen, sadly, more of the same from the Republican side: nice rhetoric, no action.

We had to file cloture again. We are now up to 83 Republican filibusters—83. As I have said before, it has gotten so there are so many of them, we now have Velcro numbers here. We can peel them off and put the number four up here. Hopefully, we will not have to do that too soon. This breaks all records ever in the history of our Congress, more than doubling the number of filibusters. We have made it clear that we are willing to work with the Republicans on compromise. Legislation is the art of compromise. We want to work together on energy legislation that both sides feel good about.

They keep talking about their drilling amendment. That has been their hue and cry for weeks now: We want to drill. We want the Governors to determine where you should drill off the coasts of their States. So we are saying we are willing to work with them. If they want to offer a drilling amendment, we will offer an alternative. Both measures would receive a vote. That is how the legislative process is supposed to work, but the latest Republican obstruction tactic has left us with no choice but to file cloture again on the speculation bill, and this chart is what that represents: 83. Otherwise, this important issue would fall off the legislative map. By forcing us to file cloture, Republicans, I believe, are wasting precious time when prompt action is necessary. So I hope in the morning we get cloture on this bill. I hope after we get cloture on the bill, the Republicans will work with us and say: OK, we want to offer our drilling amendment. That is fine. We are happy to work with them. What we have had in the past is that the rhetoric is not reality: Well, we really want to do the drilling amendment, but you are not letting us offer unlimited amendments, so we are not going to support you on anything.

The American people will certainly be waiting to see whether Republicans are willing to take yes for an answer. They have said they wanted a vote on drilling; let's see if they will take yes

for an answer and legislate on the energy crisis.

In the near future, we are going to turn to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program—LIHEAP. This is one of the best programs we have ever done in Washington. It is a great program. This energy crisis is difficult. If you are a man or a woman, a mother, a father and you have a job and you have to drive to work, there are ways, as difficult as it might be, that you can alleviate some of the burdens of high gas prices. You can take public transportation, in some instances. You can carpool. There are things that can be done. If you are a soccer mom or dad, you can carpool the kids. There are things that can be done to work with this high price of gasoline: Change the time of the practices and do all kinds of things such as that.

However, if you are a senior citizen—and here we are with August fast approaching and cold weather hitting parts of our country in October—it must be stark recognizing the limitations of being able to heat your home. It is significant. If you are old and on a fixed income, this is very scary, and that is what LIHEAP is all about.

This legislation would provide immediate relief to millions of senior citizens, families with children, and the disabled, who are struggling to pay their home energy bills, a crisis that will only worsen in the winter months ahead. LIHEAP has been highly successful, but the breathtaking rise in energy prices is making the program far less able to help those in need. That is why this legislation is supported by AARP, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Alliance for Rural America, and dozens and dozens of different farmers groups and consumer groups and other organizations.

I was approached by one of my Republican colleagues the other day who said: I hope you will bring this up. We are going to bring this up. It is a bill we should pass. I hope we don't have to jump through all the hoops, all the steps procedurally. I hope we can get this bill passed. The high price of oil and gas is making headlines. This LIHEAP legislation addresses those energy problems as well as the rising prices of propane, kerosene, natural gas, and electricity.

This legislation is important now, when high temperatures are creating health risks for the elderly and people with disabilities. It is interesting. I have been told there are more homeless dying in the summertime than the wintertime because of exposure. We talk about the cold winters—and that is very important to talk about—but for those of us who live in the West, these hot summers are very difficult. Old people need their homes cooled. So this LIHEAP legislation is important now. It is important now as we plan to prevent a major crisis that may come if gas prices do not fall significantly before winter.

We are going to introduce another package of critical bills that have been

blocked by mostly one Senator. As the Presiding Officer knows, one Senator can have tremendous power in the Senate. We are going to turn to a package of critical bills that have passed the House of Representatives, have cleared the committees in the Senate, enjoy overwhelming bipartisan support, and have been blocked by one Senator on occasion—sometimes two.

A few examples of the kinds of bills that this one individual, or a couple of his friends joining with him, have prevented us from passing and becoming law are, for example, the Emmett Till Unsolved Crimes bill. For people who lived through that era, they believe there is something that needs to be done to help heal old wounds and provide the Department of Justice and the FBI tools needed to effectively investigate and prosecute unsolved civil rights era murders.

So I say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, this is important legislation, and it should not be held up as this has been held up. This is authorizing legislation. There is no reason in the world to hold this up.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth bill would provide grants for health care, education and workforce programs and housing programs for runaways and homeless youth. Why wouldn't we pass this? It has passed the House. It has been reported out of the committee overwhelmingly.

The Combating Child Exploitation bill would provide grants to train law enforcement to use technology to track individuals who trade in child pornography.

On the Senate floor, we may not think pornography is a big issue. We should. Years ago, when I was a practicing attorney, one of my clients was Dr. O'Gorman. Dr. O'Gorman was a psychiatrist in Las Vegas. He was a prominent physician. He became president of the State Medical Society. I was preparing a contract for him. We were waiting while the secretary typed the final part of it. I said to him: Doc, what is the biggest problem people come to see you about? Remember, we are in Las Vegas more than 25 years ago. What is the biggest problem people have who come to see you? He said pornography. I was stunned. Pornography? Yes, he said, pornography. He went on in some detail to tell me how pornography ruins people's lives, breaks up marriages, and is so destructive. We have a bill dealing with grown men, mostly, who trade in child pornography. Now, shouldn't we be able to pass that legislation? It establishes an Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force within the office of Justice Programs. This is something that should be matter of fact. It is being held up. We should pass this.

I don't know how many have had the experience—I think every Senator has had a friend or a relative or a neighbor who has been struck with Lou Gehrig's disease. It is devastating. From the time this disease is discovered until

you die is about an average of 18 months. The ALS Registry bill would create a centralized database to help doctors and scientists better understand, and hopefully find a cure, for Lou Gehrig's disease. It afflicts 5,600 Americans every year.

Why is a registry important? When I first came to the Senate, I had three women come to visit me in my Las Vegas office. Those three women wanted to be someplace else, but they swallowed their pride and their embarrassment to come and visit with me. Why did they come to see me? Because all three of these women had a disease called interstitial cystitis. Ninety percent or more of the people who get this disease are women. The pain is best described as shoving slivers of glass up and down someone's bladder—excruciating pain. When these women came to see me, most all doctors thought it was psychosomatic.

Well, the first thing we did with this disease is we worked to establish within the National Institutes of Health a registry so people could gather information and have it set up so people who are physicians in one part of the country could look and see what was going on in other parts of the country and the scientists could go to work on it. Tremendous progress has been made with interstitial cystitis. Doctors can now more easily diagnosis this. There is now a medicine so that 40 percent of the people who have this disease have no pain—they are symptom-free.

One of the people who worked hard on this with us was a woman who was a professional golfer. To show you how difficult this disease is, this was a professional golfer who had been a great athlete her whole life. She was stricken with this disease before she was 30 years old. For her to try to complete a round of golf, she would have to go to the bathroom 25 or 30 times during 18 holes of golf. Well, she is one of the lucky people. The medicine helped her. She went on to win a number of tournaments. She is a success story. So why shouldn't we be able to start with Lou Gehrig's disease, as we did with this dread disease, interstitial cystitis, which now people clearly recognize is not psychosomatic.

Another piece of legislation in this package is the Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act. We all know "Superman" was in a horse accident and was paralyzed. This legislation would enhance the cooperation of research, rehabilitation, and quality of life for people who suffer from paralysis. Not only would this bill accelerate the discovery of better treatments and cures, but it would help improve the daily lives of 2 million Americans who are awaiting a cure.

So I would hope that we, moving forward on this legislation, will get support from colleagues on this side of the aisle. We should not have one or two Senators stop everything from moving forward. People say: Well, why don't you do something about it? Madam

President, this is why we don't do anything about it: 83 filibusters. As to each one of these, when we finish and get the vote on a motion to proceed, it takes 30 hours; once we get on the bill and file cloture again, into cloture invocation, another 30 hours. We can't do this. We have about 40 bills in this package, every one of them similar to the 5 I have mentioned.

So I hope people will work with me so we can give the American people some recognition that the Senate isn't going to be a graveyard for important pieces of legislation. Emmett Till, runaway homeless youth, pornography, Lou Gehrig registry, and the Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act.

I think the Republicans are going to have a choice. They can join the side of the American people or they can continue to stand beside a colleague intent on blocking virtually everything.

I hope we can work together as Democrats and Republicans to make this a week of progress, so the American people can recognize we are trying to do something to alleviate some of the problems facing this country. There are a lot of them.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

STOP EXCESSIVE ENERGY SPECULATION ACT OF 2008—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration to the motion to proceed to S. 3268, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the bill (S. 3268) to amend the Commodity Exchange Act to prevent excessive price speculation with respect to energy commodities, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Mississippi is recognized.

Mr. BOND. Madam President, following up on the comments made by the majority leader, the American public is suffering record pain at the pump. Missourians are struggling with higher gas prices. They have said in poignant and perceptive letters to me that they are hurting.

Carol Shoener, in Braymer, MO, northeast of Kansas City, wrote my office asking that the Senate take action swiftly to stop rising fuel prices. She has to drive 25 to 30 miles to the nearest town with a hospital, dentist or pharmacy.

Juanita Highfill, of Bolivar, in southwest Missouri, is retired on a fixed income. She writes that the cost of gasoline is a real hardship for her family. Her son, a kidney transplant recipient with few job skills and limited ability, drives 30 miles one way to work a minimum wage job. His net monthly in-

come is under \$400, with gas taking \$250 of that, leaving him with \$150 per month for his life's expenses.

Anthony Meis, of Pacific, MO, west of St. Louis, is on a fixed income too. He follows the markets and knows that "once we pump more oil in our country, the speculators . . . won't have the same leverage of driving up oil prices."

It is time we get real about gas prices. The Democratic leader pointed out that there are areas where there is tremendous suffering across the country. Maybe it is time he realized we need to take some substantive, comprehensive approaches to the gas price problem. No more of these show activities, these empty promises, these peripheral issues. Let us hope he meant it when he said he would allow us to debate the issues and offer amendments. That is the problem.

The majority leader has been acting as a Rules Committee such as the House has, which says we can only vote on the things he wants us to vote on. He is going to try to cram a package down our throats with a whole bunch of bills—and many are good ones—without having an opportunity to vote. I want cloture and I want to talk about an energy bill. I want to vote on it and have people go on the record and show whether they are for dealing with this crisis—the gas prices and oil prices and a whole range of energy prices.

No more saying, no, we can't, to real action on gas prices. No more saying, no, we can't, to providing American families the relief they need. No more saying, no, we can't, to going after every option available, including increasing production.

We must say, yes, we can, to real action on gas prices. Any plan that has a real chance of lowering gas prices must say, yes, we can, to increasing production; yes, we can, to increasing conservation; and, yes, we can, to addressing speculation.

We Republicans have a plan that says, yes, we can, to each of these ways to increase production, increase conservation, and address speculation.

I hope the other side will join us to allow our plan for real gas price relief to go forward. I hope we don't get shut out. I hope the majority leader doesn't fill the tree, as he has in the past. I hope they will let us act on these important measures.

I hope the Members blocking real relief for the American people finally listen to what we are hearing from home. I hear it every day from constituents back home. Farmers, truckers, and families are all suffering from gas price increases. Families from the cities to the suburbs to our rural areas are all cutting their budgets to pay higher gas prices.

At stake are good jobs in places far from affordable hospitals, the ability to live near good schools and the ability to share in the American dream. All of these need affordable energy solutions.

Why are we refusing to help families any way we can? We are tired of hear-

ing the other side of the aisle tell suffering families: No, we can't.

Farmers—the great symbol of American bounty—are suffering. They provide for us. Why are we refusing to provide for them? They need affordable fuel to run their farm equipment, store their harvest, and ship their goods to market.

One of the biggest costs of food is that of transportation. Why are we telling those who produce our food, package it, ship it—why are we telling them, no, we can't help them with their energy costs?

Truckers across the country are suffering. Many trucking companies are small businesses. They are laying off workers and some are going bankrupt. Why are we telling struggling truckers, no, we can't?

The American people understand what is going on. They are smart enough to know that if you don't have enough of something, you go out and get more of it. It is economics 101. If prices are too high, it is because there is not enough supply and too much demand. Yet the leadership on the other side of the aisle, and the Democratic Party, have done everything they can to prevent more production of the bountiful gas and oil resources we have in our country. Of course, there was the 1995 veto by President Clinton of the Republican authorization to open drilling in ANWR. He said it would take 10 years to produce oil. Well, 10 years was probably longer than it would have taken, but that time has long past. We are missing out on a million barrels of oil a day that would have come from ANWR.

The Republicans have a plan. Our Gas Price Reduction Act takes real action on oil supplies. Right now, there are, at a minimum, 18 billion barrels of oil waiting for us off our Atlantic and Pacific coasts. That is 10 years of supply we are blocking from ourselves, stopping ourselves from producing.

The Gas Price Reduction Act will open these offshore areas and allow us to put the American oil to use for Americans.

For those who say it would take years to get, they ignore the immediate price-lowering effect of the news of new supplies. It happened last week. After the President announced suspension of the Presidential moratorium on offshore drilling, prices are down \$16 a barrel. It is now up to us in Congress to get off our duffs and do the same thing and bring immediate, long-term, lasting relief to American families and farmers. When Congress finally gets its act together and gives the go-ahead, we can see new wells being brought on, some in relatively short periods of time.

For those States concerned with opening drilling off their shores, our plan would allow States to opt out. If California doesn't want to participate, that is fine. But that should not block States such as Virginia and Alaska, where they want to drill.