

gaining expertise in developing the green technologies that will power economic growth for upcoming decades.

We can recapture our leadership role by supporting renewable energy companies here at home, realigning our energy incentives, and investing in research and development that will create new technologies. This week, we considered the America COMPETES Act, which outlines a doubling of Federal research over the next decade. Although this bill is opposed by those that favor the same energy sources now devastating the Gulf, I'm confident we will pass this critical measure, and with this investment we will ensure that new energy ideas are created here at home by American students and American entrepreneurs. But we must also ensure these ideas are turned into American companies, providing green-tech business with the tools it needs to grow, train, and hire workers. We must establish renewable energy standards like the one in California that is stimulating investment up and down our State.

Mr. Speaker. In the short time I speak here today, thousands of gallons of oil will burst out of a broken well in the floor of the Gulf of Mexico. That oil will add to a catastrophic spill that is now spreading across a widening swath of ocean, coming ashore in Louisiana, and devastating the economy of the Gulf Coast. Every attempt to cap the gusher has failed, and it seems we can anticipate several more months of damage to our coastline, our fisheries and our environment.

As a nation, we have been on an oil binge since the 1850s, when we started running out of our previous nonrenewable energy resource—whale oil. The wide-scale destruction that the whale hunts of the 19th century visited on our seas is now mirrored by the damage that offshore drilling is visiting upon the Gulf.

Two decades ago, Congress first recognized the danger of offshore drilling and passed a moratorium banning it outside Alaska and the Gulf. In California, many will remember the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill that spewed out almost 100,000 barrels of oil over eight days. Lax safety standards and corner-cutting were the immediate culprits in that spill, but the Gulf spill shows us that even with today's advanced technology, offshore drilling is fundamentally dangerous. Thousands of gallons of oil is spilled each year during normal operations. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita sent over half a million gallons into the Gulf. And even without spills, piping and onshore operations destroy wetlands, disturb wildlife and limit tourism.

Californians are not willing to risk our tourism and fishing industries, or our pristine environment, with additional off-shore drilling, and I'm happy that the governor has stepped back from his plan for more drilling off the coast near Santa Barbara. Instead of more drilling, and more spills, Californians are leading the way to a high-tech, clean energy future.

A few blocks from my office in Pasadena, you'll find a business incubator that has helped turn clean-energy ideas into successful companies employing hundreds of Americans. One of these companies is now deploying modular concentrating solar power stations in

the Mojave Desert, using mass-produced panels and modern manufacturing techniques to create some of the cheapest solar power in the world. Others are working on more efficient solar cells for rooftops, and many other revolutionary technologies.

This kind of technological innovation isn't limited to Southern California—renewable energy is booming in Texas and Massachusetts, South Dakota and Georgia. And with the first mass produced plug-in hybrid cars appearing this fall, clean energy will soon be fueling our vehicles as well.

But our American-made high-tech boom is threatened by subsidies that keep fossil fuel prices artificially low, stifling competition and sustaining our dangerous dependence on foreign oil. Some of those subsidies are direct, like tax breaks for oil companies. The Administration's budget has proposed ending \$45 billion worth of subsidies that tilt the playing field away from clean energy.

Other subsidies are indirect, like limited liability for oil spills and air pollution. In the Los Angeles basin, endemic smog caused by fossil fuels is a hidden tax on every resident, costing millions of dollars in additional health care and lost work hours. Last year, the National Academy of Sciences estimated that health care and other costs created by gasoline consumption come to about 30 cents a gallon, without considering global warming. That cost is absorbed by all of us, in the form of hospital bills and asthma attacks. We must rebalance our energy subsidies so that clean energy can compete on an equal footing with oil, coal and natural gas.

And we need to adapt quickly, because China is now the leader in clean-energy technology. In a few short years, the Chinese have developed a vibrant industrial base that produces more photovoltaic cells than any other nation. Meanwhile, China's demand continues to grow—it is the world leader in hydropower and second in wind power, stimulating a job-intensive domestic industry to meet the demand. To boost its green economy, China created a stimulus package worth hundreds of billions of dollars. And Chinese universities and research centers are quickly gaining expertise in developing the new green technologies that will power economic growth for upcoming decades.

We can recapture our leadership role by supporting renewable energy companies here at home, realigning our energy incentives, and investing in the research and development that will create new technologies. This week, we considered the America COMPETES Act, which outlines a doubling of federal research over the next decade. Although this bill is opposed by those that favor the same energy sources now devastating the Gulf, I am confident we will pass this critical measure. And with this investment, we will ensure that new energy ideas are created here at home, by American students and American entrepreneurs.

But we also must ensure that those ideas turn into American companies. We must provide green-tech business with the tools they need to grow, train and hire new workers. We must establish renewable energy standards, like the one in California that is stimulating investment up and down the state. We must strengthen our electrical grid, so that new sources of energy can be added without stressing the system. And we must update our

electrical meters, so that homeowners can pay less if they shift some of their energy use to off-peak hours.

Our new whale oil has lasted longer than the original, but it is easy to see now that it no longer makes sense, for our economy, for our national security, or for our environment. We face a challenge we can and will meet, but it is not one we can face if we put our heads in the sand and invest more money, lives and effort in the last century's energy source. Instead we must move forward to the new renewable energy future, that awaits us—the most industrious and inventive nation on Earth.

PIRATES ON THE LAKE—PAGE 2

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, heavily armed Mexican pirates have been shaking down U.S. boaters on Falcon Lake in Texas. It's a reservoir and a bass fishing haven that straddles the Rio Grande River in Texas—between Texas and Mexico. It's the international boundary between Zapata County, Texas, and Mexico.

According to recent San Antonio news reports, several such incidents have been reported with pirates on Falcon Lake since April 30, the latest being this past Sunday. According to the Texas Department of Public Safety, which issued warnings Tuesday, the robberies are linked to northern Mexico's increasing lawlessness. According to the descriptions of the incidents, the pirates in at least one case posed as Mexican federal law enforcement officers. They searched fishermen's boats for guns and drugs and then demanded cash at gunpoint. According to the Texas Department of Public Safety, the robbers are believed to be members of a drug trafficking organization or members of an enforcer group linked to a drug trafficking organization. They use AK-47s or AR-15 rifles to threaten their victims. They appear to be using local Mexican fishermen to operate the boats to rob the American fishermen.

It was unclear why sport fishermen were targeted, but the warning comes only a few weeks before bass fishing tournaments that are among the south Texas border region's biggest tourist draws. DPS spokesman Tom Vinger said the warning was issued, in part, because of the upcoming bass tournaments. Zapata County Sheriff Sigi Gonzalez said he would be reviewing protective measures with the DPS Border Security Operations Center and the region's Fusion Center, which is a Federal information clearinghouse for terrorism prevention.

Reported victims included, one, five people in two boats who were approached by four men on April 30, claiming to be federales near the church at Old Guerrero. That is now a submerged town in the bottom of the lake. The men boarded the boats, demanded cash, and wanted to know

where the drugs were. They then robbed the Americans.

A second incident. Three fishermen were approached on May 6 by a boat containing two men pointing AR-15s. Those are assault rifles, Mr. Speaker. One boarded the fishing boat, searched for drugs, cash and guns, chambered a round in the rifle and told the fishermen he would shoot them if they did not give him the money. In another pirate raid, fishermen were robbed of their money and boat and clothes and left naked on the Mexican side of the lake. Yet in a fourth incident, boaters on the U.S. side of the lake were approached by a boat containing five armed men. It's still unclear what else happened because this just happened 2 days ago.

Falcon Lake is approximately 60 miles long. It's a reservoir on the Rio Grande, fronting Starr and Zapata Counties in Texas, and it is shared between the United States and Mexico. It was formed by a dam in 1953 to conserve water for agriculture and control downstream flooding.

Mr. Speaker, piracy is a centuries-old problem that many nations have had to deal with. In the 1800s, Thomas Jefferson sent the United States Navy to the Mediterranean Sea, where pirates roamed at will and robbed American ships. That President fought piracy on the high seas. But the difference now is our administration would rather criticize people in States like Arizona that demand more border security rather than do anything about illegal border crossers, including the pirates of Falcon Lake.

Meanwhile, today, President Calderon of Mexico arrogantly lectured us in a joint session of Congress, chastising the United States—especially Arizona—for passing legislation trying to prevent people from illegally coming into the United States. Mr. Speaker, when 65 percent of the American people support Arizona's new law regarding illegal immigration, his comments were disingenuous and disrespectful to our Nation.

I commend President Calderon for fighting the international drug cartels in his Nation, but the President of Mexico should deal with his own issues and solve Mexico's economic problems, human rights problems, organized crime problems, violence problems, government corruption problems, and illegal immigration problems before President Calderon lectures anybody about anything.

And that's just the way it is.

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

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

H.R. 5353, THE WAR IS MAKING YOU POOR ACT

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

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced H.R. 5353, the War is Making You Poor Act. The War is Making You Poor Act does three things: First, it requires the administration to carry out the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan with only—only—the \$549 billion set forth in the President's budget for defense spending, without the additional \$159 billion the President has asked for for the sake of the so-called emergency war, which now stretches on to 9 years in one case and 7 years in the other. My view is that \$549 billion is enough for these wars or any other wars the President plans to engage in.

What this does, secondly, is that it takes the money that is saved from the war separate allocation and it uses that for a very important purpose with our economy the way it is and people in America suffering. It takes that money—or 90 percent of it—and it uses that to make \$35,000 of everyone's income in America tax-free. And \$70,000 for married couples. Let's be clear about that. Let's be clear about what I said. With the money that is being saved by the War is Making You Poor Act, we can make \$35,000 of every American's income tax-free. And \$70,000 for married couples. And in addition to that, it takes the remaining money and reduces the Federal deficit and the Federal debt. I think those are three things, all of which need to be done. This bill brings them all together.

Let's start with the fact that the administration has asked for \$549 billion to basically keep the lights on at the Pentagon, and beyond that, asked for another \$159 billion for the wars. Let's see exactly how much that means. On this chart here, you can see that U.S. military spending is as much as the entire rest of the world combined. As much as the entire rest of the world combined. And in fact, the ones who come in second are NATO allies in Europe, who I don't expect to be attacking us any time soon. Beyond that, you have to go all the way down to China to get to any country that is conceivably ever going to be a military enemy. And we outspend China by over five to one. Beyond that, we get into our allies in East Asia and Australia, and you have to go all the way down to Russia, whom we outspend by almost ten to one, before you get to any country that could conceivably be a military opponent.

Why is this necessary? If we're going to have military spending that amounts to this much—half of all the military spending the world—do we need to have on top of that—on top of that base budget—another \$150 billion for the war? I think not, particularly when the people in America are suffering.

So I believe that the thing we need to do is to take that \$159 billion that the President has set aside. We're not saying he has to stop the war. We're not giving a cutoff date for the war. We're simply saying you need to fund that out of the base budget of \$549 billion. And we take 90 percent of that money and give it back to the American people.

I think most people would be surprised to learn that that is so much money that we have been spending on the war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq that every single taxpayer in America will be able to get his first or her first \$35,000 of income completely tax-free. You won't see dollar one in tax until you make more than that. In fact, almost a third of Americans don't make more than that so they will simply be excused from the Federal income tax system. And all we need to do is to stop separately funding the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Now I've heard a lot of complaints from the other side and complaints from people on our side about the Federal debt and the Federal deficit. Here's something concrete that you can do. If this bill passes, we'll be able to reduce the Federal deficit by \$16 billion. You don't have to take my word for it. It's already been scored by the Joint Committee on Taxation. The Joint Committee on Taxation staff has determined that the tax cut that's needed to get every single person in America \$35,000 tax-free—their first \$35,000—would cost less than the wars and would leave over after that another \$16 billion.

Mr. Speaker, this is an idea whose time has come. It's time for the American people to see that there is no longer any need to go beyond the base, exorbitant defense budget that's presented to us by the President, notwithstanding the fact that there are wars in Afghanistan in Iraq. It's simply not necessary. You can see for yourself. Enough is enough. \$549 billion is plenty, particularly when we're using a Chinese credit card to pay for it all.

So I ask for your support, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that the Chamber will consider H.R. 5353, the War is Making You Poor Act.

□ 1730

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 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 Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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