

billions of dollars—or in our case right now, trillions of dollars—might be okay in the short term if there is a fix, over the long term it will seriously damage our Nation's economic growth prospects.

The Federal Reserve chair, when I asked him, pointed out that perhaps a budget deficit of about \$300 billion could be sustained. We are, of course, looking today at a Federal budget deficit well in excess of \$1 trillion—with no end in sight. And what's even more troubling to me is the Federal Reserve chairman pointed out to this Congress that we have no fix in place.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I want to reiterate and further urge all of the Members of this Congress as we go through this budgeting process—and it is a tragedy that this Congress has still yet to pass a budget—we have to exercise greater fiscal restraint, reduce the amount of enormous spending going on in this government. If we do not take care of our Nation's budget deficit, this budget deficit will take care of us.

I remind all of the Members of this Chamber we do not have to look any further than what's happening in the nation of Greece right now and the fiscal and enormous financial problems going on in Europe. If our Nation and our Congress do not restrain the spending, reduce taxes, and limit government, we will be in the same mess.

BP OIL SPILL DISASTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, in the United States right now we are experiencing an environmental catastrophe. We are experiencing with the BP oil rig the largest single oil spill in American history. It's a little hard to contemplate just how big this oil spill is; 21 million to 44 million gallons of oil—four times the oil spilled in the Exxon Valdez disaster—have so far spilled into the Gulf of Mexico. 12,000 to 25,000 barrels a day—that's a million gallons a day—are spilling, a rate 12 to 25 times higher than BP's original highest estimate of 4,600 gallons a day. The biggest oil spill in American history.

If we want to know just how big that is, this is the extent of the oil spill today in the Gulf of Mexico. It is the equivalent in terms of size of Delaware, Rhode Island, and Connecticut combined. Think of that geography. Hundreds of square miles. That's what this is.

Just recently it was announced that underwater plumes, not just the surface plume depicted here, have been detected 150 miles away in distance from the original site of the oil spill.

Locally what that means is essentially we have an oil spill, a surface oil spill that covers the territory that

would be the equivalent of the distance between Washington, D.C., and New York City. That's as of today. In my 11th Congressional District of Virginia, that would mean starting in Dale City near Manassas in Prince William County and going as far as Wilmington, Delaware. That's the thick oil spill.

The broader oil spill, as I said, would go all the way to New York City. That's an extraordinary stretch in terms of this oil spill.

This oil spill could have been prevented.

In 1969, an oil well spilled 200,000 gallons of crude oil on the California coast. In response, like this and other environmental issues, like the burning of the Cuyahoga River, Congress passed the National Environmental Policy Act, known as NEPA, in 1969.

□ 1700

NEPA requires companies to plan to avoid environmental disasters like that 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill by conducting simple environmental impact statements. Ironically, the Minerals Management Service, known as the MMS, granted the Deepwater Horizon rig a categorical exclusion from this process so it did not have to conduct an environmental impact statement based on research in 2007 in which the MMS, the regulator, decided that a deepwater spill would not exceed 4,600 barrels and would never reach the shoreline. What a tragic, ironic twist of fate. None of that turned out to be true.

Congressional Republican majorities and the Bush administration even directed agencies to use categorical exclusions for oil development. Action by the Secretary of the Interior in managing the public lands, it said, or the Secretary of Agriculture in managing national forest systems lands with respect to any of the activities described in subsection B shall be subject to a rebuttable presumption that the use of categorical exclusion under the NEPA of 1969 would apply if the activity is conducted pursuant to the Mineral Leasing Act for the purpose of exploration or development of oil or gas. An explicit exemption made for oil drilling in America by the previous administration. Just following the NEPA process could have led to a review that would have resulted in better safety equipment. Might have even resulted in an inspection that might have caught early the flaws in this design.

The 2009 Government Accountability Office report said that during the previous administration categorical exclusions were issued far too frequently and it could lead to serious problems. Well, indeed, it did. I find this particularly ironic because, in my district, we have been fighting for a long time to get rail to Dulles, an extension of the rail system here in metropolitan Washington to Dulles International Airport. We finally got that process approved last year, but that process required a NEPA review. This is a public transit project, but it had to go

through a 2-year environmental review that cost millions of dollars of taxpayer-funded money for a public project. But ironically, a private oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico was excluded from that process. It didn't have to do it.

I see on the floor my friend from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER). I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy, as I appreciate his leadership, and I think it is important for people to understand the genesis of the problem that we are facing here now.

We've heard some of our friends on the other side of the aisle come to the floor somehow trying to lay this at the feet of the President of the United States, but sadly, what has happened here in the gulf is a direct result of policies that we have seen implemented by our friends on the other side of the aisle when they were in charge, particularly under the watch of President Bush, where it was routine to come to the floor repeatedly in efforts to undercut environmental protections, where agencies that were supposed to regulate the industry were stopped with refugees from the very industries, from lobbyists and association executives who are going back now and looking at from whence they had come.

We had situations that, by the end of the Bush administration, it was clear in the MMS that there were people in that critical agency tasked by law with the protection of the public interest who were not only avoiding that responsibility, they were literally in bed with the industry.

I look forward to an opportunity in the course of the next few minutes to discuss with you further the genesis of the problem that we face and approaches that we should be taking to make sure that we're no longer held hostage to what even President Bush referred to as our addiction to oil.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I thank my colleague, and I think his point is a very cogent one, and it's even worse than we're discussing because not only did we consciously decide during the Bush administration and by previous Congresses, frankly controlled by our friends on the other side, consciously to exclude such oil drilling from the regular environmental review that could have detected problems, but it was worse than that.

Let me give an example in terms of what measures that at least could have mitigated the impact of this disaster. Canada, as my friend from Oregon knows, requires deepwater rigs to have contingency plans for offshore oil drilling, including the capability to drill relief wells soon after constructing primary wells. If this well, this Deepwater Horizon well, had predrilled such relief wells, it would have allowed the closing of the leak weeks ago, but they weren't required to do so.

Norway and Brazil require something called acoustic valves which are

backup devices for closing the pipe of a blowout preventer. In 2003, under the Bush administration, the Minerals Management Service concluded that the \$550,000 acoustic system is not recommended because it tends to be very costly. I would say to my friend from Oregon, as he knows, as of June 7, the response to this oil spill cost \$1.25 billion and climbing. That \$550,000 investment in an acoustic valve could have saved billions of dollars and could have saved an ecosystem now at incredible jeopardy.

I yield again to my friend from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you. As I am listening to your presentation, talking about what could have happened, what should have happened, and looking at the magnitude of the devastation that we are facing in an ongoing disaster, I was reflecting on my experience here in the House under Republican control and the Bush administration where their first instinct—the gentleman will recall because he was an important elected official just across the Potomac and had a front-row view of what was happening here—that the Vice President convened a secret energy consultation group, his energy task force, which to this day has not been revealed in terms of who were the members—although we're most certain that there were people from BP, for instance, that were there—that from the outset it was all about trying to cut through these red tape items, the environmental protection, things that got in the way of energy production, and not focusing on priorities that would have reduced our reliance on fossil fuels.

Indeed, there were 105 recommendations. Only 7 involved renewable energy. We watched, in the year that followed, the Bush administration actually propose cuts in the renewable energy budget and had tax breaks that they worked on with the Republican leadership to provide incentives for more dirty oil production and consistently fought against efforts that we brought to the floor, including in some instances bipartisan amendments to raise the fuel efficiency standards that hadn't been increased in a quarter century.

I'm reflecting on that and saddened that that was the thrust for most of the last decade, instead of putting us in a position where we would be less reliant and have better protection.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Again, I agree with my friend from Oregon completely, and as he points out, this didn't happen by an act of God. This happened because of lax or no regulation, regulation we knew was necessary and we took a chance. We took a chance. And we took a chance, why? Because of the almighty dollar. We took a chance because of Big Oil money, making sure that it influenced the process and made sure that it was exempted from normal regulatory review. And you have to ask yourself in

those kinds of circumstances, well, what could go wrong?

Let me enumerate a little bit what has gone wrong: 200,000 commercial fishing, processing, and retail jobs in the gulf for fishing and seafood on ice; \$659 million in annual value on 1.27 billion pounds of seafood caught in the gulf, the largest source of seafood in America, not including the value of fish processing or retail or people's salaries, in jeopardy; \$5.5 billion annual value of commercial fishing industry in the gulf coast, including the value of fish harvest processing and retail, in jeopardy; \$12 billion of expenditures for 25.4 million recreational trips in the Gulf of Mexico at risk; \$9 billion in wages for tourism-related industries in the Gulf of Mexico, employing 600,000 people.

That's what's at risk for a mindless, "drill, baby, drill" approach, instead of a thoughtful, careful approach that balances this kind of sourcing of oil with the readily available alternative energy sources that we should have, could have been investing in as well.

Since this oil spill, over 27,000 claims have been filed by people and businesses whose livelihoods have been harmed or lost entirely. They've filed claims for damages with BP. Through June, BP will have paid \$84 million in lost income claims to people whose jobs already have been lost in the gulf. Over 78,000 square miles of the gulf are closed to fishing today because of this spill because it's not safe. The University of Central Florida estimates that the oil spill could cut Florida tourism in half, the largest single source of revenue for the State of Florida, eliminating 195,000 tourism-related jobs and eliminating \$10.9 billion of tourist-generated economic activity in Florida alone.

I see our colleague from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) is on the floor, and I now yield to him.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Virginia.

This disaster of great proportion is indicative of the culture of deregulation and the influence of the special interests in the oil industry and the prevalence of those interests within the Bush administration, embedded into the regulatory structure. These interests within the Department of the Interior fought tooth and nail Secretary Salazar's attempts to bring balance back to the oil and gas industry. They fought with claims of severe economic hardship. Well, as the gentleman from Virginia talked about, I think the people of the gulf coast will be experiencing severe economic hardship, much worse than anything that these oil companies were worried about.

All actors involved with this unmitigated disaster have taken steps to try to limit their own liability. BP and Transocean have tried to spread their profits among shareholders. They've been giving dividends. They have been trying to decentralize their coffers, already scheming to get themselves off

the hook and to put taxpayers on the hook. These oil companies are now trying to maneuver to get taxpayer bailouts for their own bad practices and their own failure to prevent what was a preventable disaster.

The use of highly toxic dispersants have exacerbated the damage, leading to underwater plumes of oil. It turns out that the emergency response plan of BP was riddled with errors, had fallacies. It even listed people who were no longer alive as points of contact in the event of a disaster.

We need, and I'm sure we will have, a full public accounting of the fallacies and the flaws in the planning process with BP and their contractors that have led to this disaster, and it's critical for our Congress to make sure that these maneuvers to get off the hook for their own failure to prevent this catastrophe will not meet with success and that the responsibility will reside with BP and their contractors.

NEPA requires an assessment of environmental impact for any major project on Federal lands, but loopholes were placed in that policy in 2005, including a categorical exclusion, saying that oil drilling doesn't have any risk and, therefore, shouldn't need to do an environmental assessment.

□ 1715

The Deepwater Horizon was granted a categorical exclusion in 2007 under the Bush administration. Ironical, because NEPA was first initiated in 1968 as a response to an oil spill offshore, yes, off the coast of California, stripped of the very provisions that are one of the main reasons for its passage by the Bush administration.

We as a Congress need to address the statutory side, and I know that Secretary Salazar is working hard to fight the entrenched interests from the oil and gas industry that seek to influence the actions of the Department of the Interior.

I thank my colleague from Virginia for helping to raise this important issue.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I thank my colleague from Colorado.

I yield again to our friend from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I do appreciate our friend from Colorado talking about the history here, because we hear people come to the floor to somehow lay this at the foot of President Obama, who has been busy since the moment he took office dealing with a series of disasters that he inherited.

But the approach that has been taken by the Republicans when they were in the majority actually set the stage for this. In 2003, they added an exemption for all oil and gas construction activities from the provisions of the Clean Water Act. They had a stipulation that the BLM had only 10 days to make drilling permit decisions. They had new authority for the Department of the Interior to permit new energy projects in the Outer Continental

Shelf without adequate oversight or standards and then providing, on top of that, \$2 billion for already profitable companies to drill in ultradeep water.

It is absolutely scandalous that we have had this steady assault. Luckily, we stopped that in 2003 when the other body used the filibuster constructively. But we faced it in 2005, as they actually were able to put those provisions in place, which our friend from Colorado and you, sir, Mr. CONNOLLY, have pointed out. It continues to bedevil us.

Sadly, some of our friends on the other side of the aisle simply haven't gotten the point. In this Congress, the gentlewoman from Minnesota, Mrs. BACHMANN, who has no shortage of opinions on this, introduced legislation that would have required, would have required that the Secretary of the Interior waive any application of Federal law that requires a permit under lease for drilling. It would require a waiver from all of those nagging little requirements any time oil got expensive, over \$100 a barrel, throw it all out the window, and yet has the audacity to try and shift responsibility under this.

I think it is something that we all need to be focusing on and not allow the people who helped create this problem to rewrite history.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I, again, am in complete concurrence. This didn't happen somehow by happenstance. This happened by virtue of a conscious decision, by Congress' control, by our friends on the other side, and by the Bush administration to find all kinds of waivers and exemptions from normal regulatory review and from simple commonsense protections in the event something did go wrong, all at the altar of oil exploration and fossil fuel energy dependence, quite frankly. It could have been prevented and it could have been mitigated.

There was another one of our colleagues who, during the campaign of 2008, accused the Democratic Congress that came into power after the elections of 2006 of being the drill-nothing Congress, and she called on Mr. MCCAIN to open up ANWR and both the east and west coast to unrestrained oil drilling for the sake of energy independence, a worthy goal. But that's not the only answer, and we have to weigh the costs and the benefits when we open up unrestricted oil drilling on pristine coasts.

Let me talk, if I may, just about my own home State of Virginia, what could go wrong in Virginia. I am a member of the Virginia delegation who has opposed unrestricted opening up of our shores to oil drilling because of the feared consequences if something went wrong.

What's at stake? Tourism in Virginia Beach alone in Virginia generates \$1.4 billion annually in economic activity. Tourism in Virginia Beach alone supports 15,000 jobs. Virginia has the longest stretch of undeveloped barrier islands on the east coast, irreplaceable habitat for birds in the east coast flyaway.

All of these resources would be lost to an oil spill off Virginia's coast if it were comparable to the oil spill that has hit the gulf coast. In fact, closer to home, the entire Chesapeake Bay would be covered by a film of oil today if that oil spill had occurred here instead of occurring in the gulf coast.

In addition, unrestricted oil drilling threatens the presence of the United States Navy in Virginia, terribly important in terms of military investment in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Deputy Secretary of Defense for Readiness issued a report in May that stated explicitly that offshore oil development would impair Navy operations in 78 percent of the area, in a recently proposed lease sale, to 20.

The Department of Defense said that all development could preclude live ordnance testing, aircraft carrier movement, shipping trials, and other surface and subsurface training. Offshore oil development could result in the Navy moving an aircraft carrier out of Norfolk, reducing job opportunities and contractors in Virginia.

We have a lot at stake economically in my State. There's the environmental consequences, but there is also the presence of the Navy that could be jeopardized if we moved to the "drill, baby, drill" philosophy of offshore oil drilling.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate your putting in context not just the potential threat to your State of Virginia, but to all of us here who work and celebrate our capital region and the Chesapeake Bay, having those precious resources at risk.

I appreciate your exploring a dimension that I must admit I really hadn't thought through adequately: the threat unregulated, indiscriminate, offshore oil drilling could pose to military readiness. Your point about what could happen in terms of naval operations and training is one that I don't think has been given voice in this debate. I have been spending a lot of time working on it. This is new information to me, and I deeply appreciate your putting it out before the American public this evening.

I think this issue that we are wrestling with has many dimensions that require us to step back and expand the scope of inquiry, the need for our fixing a broken regulatory system.

We have referenced the fact that the administration, despite the previous administration talking about the addiction to foreign oil, did nothing about it, and, in fact, even after we regained control, worked against our efforts to try and increase efficiencies.

It's going to take time. I agree that the administration needs to move quickly to weed out the MMS. I wish they could have cleaned house earlier, but obviously these things take time. It's hard to undo 12 years of running roughshod over safety and environmental regulations in 17 months. But it is also a vivid call for a new energy future in which the deepest water is the

last place we look, not the first, for new energy sources.

I would look forward to discussing that further, but I know you have, Mr. CONNOLLY, some specifics in terms of some of the legislative provisions that we have been working on as Democrats in Congress.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Yes, we need to clean up the mess we inherited from previous Congresses and, frankly, from the previous administration. Today, for example, the House passed S. 3473, which increases advanced cleanup funding paid for by BP so that the Coast Guard can use those funds for oil cleanup.

I have introduced a bill just tonight that would prevent the evasion of the NEPA process; moving forward, no more categorical exclusions for deep-water oil drilling. They have to pass the NEPA review process, just like my transit system and rail to Dulles did in a public project.

H.R. 5214, the Big Oil Bailout Prevention Act, introduced by our colleague, Mr. HOLT from New Jersey, would raise the oil liability cap from \$75 million to \$10 billion so the taxpayers aren't left holding the bag because of an accident caused by the negligence of an oil company such as BP.

Our colleague from the State of Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is introducing legislation to require oil wells to use the best available safety technology, which might borrow from technology that's already available and being used by countries like Canada, Brazil, and Norway. Of course, you, Mr. BLUMENAUER, have or will soon introduce legislation to repeal the oil and gas tax loopholes and direct funds to clean energy.

The ultimate solution is to get off fossil fuel dependence and look to, in a meaningful way, those alternative sources of energy that could really help lessen our dependence, if not wean us entirely off, the dependence on foreign oil.

In my own home State of Virginia, the potential offshore wind power is enormous, dwarfing the potential for offshore oil.

For all of the sturm und drang in my State about whether we should drill, baby, drill off the shores of Virginia, the entire estimate of reserves, maximum, off the shore of Virginia, with the largest coastline, barrier island coastline on the east coast, is the equivalent of no more than 6 days of oil supply.

Do we really want to risk the tourism industry, our environment, perhaps permanently, and the presence of the Navy in a State that has always been home to the United States Navy for 6 days' worth of supply? I think not.

So the Democrats in this House have, in fact, introduced legislation that will address and remedy this situation and make sure that never again are American citizens put at risk by the negligent behavior and the unregulated behavior of Big Oil offshore oil drilling.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I must say how much I appreciate the legislative approach that you bring to the job. I can see the experience and leadership that you demonstrated in years of actual hands-on dealing with the public in a very direct and personal way in local government with some spectacular successes across the river from our Nation's Capitol, as evidenced in the simple, commonsense approach that you are taking here in terms of being practical, being direct, things that will make a difference. I really appreciate that spirit that you bring to the Capitol.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I thank you for your courtesy and graciousness, but I would say that clearly my colleague from Oregon is a model for all of us, especially those of us new here to the Congress, for his environmental leadership and for his legislative legerdemain.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I would like to be pivot, if I could, just on the last point that you made, which I think, at the final analysis, is the most important.

It is important to understand history. It's important to not allow people who got us into this mess to rewrite it, to point fingers, to obscure, to try and get partisan advantage from something that they, sadly, helped create in the first place. That would be a tragedy in and of itself.

But it is where we go from here, what we learn from these lessons, what we understand is required. It is outrageous to me that the spill off the Santa Barbara coast that inspired the first Earth Day was fought with essentially the same technologies that we have available today.

□ 1730

All the time, all the energy, the resources that were thrown at it by the Federal Government was used basically by the industry to have more and more esoteric, sophisticated deep-drilling opportunities, not dealing with making sure that it was safe.

So we are trapped in time 40 years at the negative end of this equation, when the ultimate disaster, which was predictable, perhaps not avoidable, but is much worse because of the focus.

But it is the transition to clean energy technology that I would conclude my remarks. I see we've been joined by our friend we have referenced earlier, our colleague, Congressman HOLT, who has some great legislation moving.

But I would just conclude my observations that we don't want to be in a position where we continue to be tethered to the oil spigot, to have the United States consume 10 percent of the world's oil supply going back and forth to work every day, that it is past time for us to move forward.

I appreciate the leadership of both you gentlemen in our livable communities issues, where we provide more tools to local government and more choices to people so they don't have to burn a gallon of gas to get a gallon of

milk, that there are more sensitive land uses, that we fight against mindless sprawl, that we give people an alternative to the automobile in case they don't want to drive or can't afford to drive or maybe there are some people that we all know who probably shouldn't drive—giving them choices to walk and use transit, cycles; be able to make a system that is more sustainable, that is complemented by a clean energy future with tidal, wind, solar, geothermal, and investment in making our facilities now more energy-efficient.

We have the capacity right now, with what we know how to do, things that we have off the shelf or almost ready for installation, we could be completely Kyoto-compliant, save consumers and taxpayers money, and preserve our national security.

I hope that this is one of the lessons we carry away, not just understanding history, not just taking some of this terrific legislation that will help a difficult situation be a little better and take the taxpayer off the hook, but make sure that we are not in this dependency in the future.

Thank you. And I really appreciate your leadership in presenting this today and your courtesy in permitting me to take part.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I thank you so much.

I think our colleague from Oregon has done such an incredible job in this body on so many environmental fronts, not least of which, of course, the livable community initiative that he made reference to.

Thank you so much for joining us tonight.

I see our friend from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is here, and I now yield to Mr. HOLT.

Mr. HOLT. I thank my good friend from Virginia.

I, too, want to pay tribute to the work that our colleague from Oregon has done under the umbrella of liveability, having to do with transportation, housing, I mean, even such things as the location of post offices in town.

There are so many things over the years that Mr. BLUMENAUER has worked on to try to make communities livable and sustainable—sustainable in the way they produce and use energy, and livable in the sense of getting the best quality of life through our transportation decisions, our housing decisions.

What is so heartbreaking about the catastrophe that is under way in the Gulf of Mexico right now is that it did not have to be.

As I left to join you here on the floor, they were showing on one of the news networks fish flopping sadly, trying to get air, trying to get out of the oil, clearly doomed. We have seen the birds washing ashore.

It did not have to happen.

The oil spill is unprecedented in scale, but it is not unprecedented in

kind, in our experience. In fact, I was talking with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency yesterday, and she said, do you know how many oil spills we're dealing with essentially daily? Not on this scale, but it should be expected, it can be expected, in fact it must be expected that, if you drill, you will spill.

As our colleague from Oregon was saying, for BP to go into this with no preparation whatsoever—I mean, they talk about they are a company that manages risk. Well, if they manage risk, they know, by definition, things can go wrong. That's what risk means: There is a down side. Well, what preparations, what plans, what studies, what research did they do for the down side? None.

Now, we are in the process of not only extending the liability limit—and today we removed the per-incident limit so that the Coast Guard is not constrained by the \$150 million limit, which they are already pushing up against—but we also must make sure that there is an enforcement of standards within the Minerals Management Agency separating those who grant the leases from those who collect the royalties on the leases from those who enforce the standards. We haven't done that. So we must do that, and we must do that soon, so that if any oil drilling is going to continue, that preparations are made for the down side.

I hope, in fact, that we wean ourselves from this archaic fuel as soon as possible. I mean, what does the word "fossil" mean to most people? That means out of date. What we are talking about here, what these companies have been developing ever-more-sophisticated technologies to do is to bind ourselves more strongly to an archaic way of powering our society and our economy. It is archaic. We should be moving away from it as rapidly as possible so that this won't happen again, because it need not happen again.

I thank my friend for drawing our colleagues' attention to this and talking about those things that we will be doing over the next couple of weeks, lifting the liability limits to put in place research programs and regulatory programs for the future.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I thank our friend from New Jersey and thank him for his leadership as well.

Let me close by pointing out that there is a danger to bumper-sticker public policy making. Those who lived by "drill, baby, drill" now have to examine not only their consciences but the consequences of the actions that flowed from that strident call. "Drill, baby, drill" has now become "spill, baby, spill."

The Governor of Louisiana today, Bobby Jindal, when he was in this body in 2005 said the following: "We have a choice. Many of my colleagues do not want us drilling for oil off the coast of Florida and do not want us to drill for oil off the coast of California. I would ask those colleagues to join with me in

providing incentives so that we can drill for oil in the deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The people of Louisiana," he said, "welcome this production. We know it is good for our State, our country, and our economy."

I wonder if the Governor of Louisiana might pause today in calling for the government's assistance to clean up the worst oil spill, and arguably one of the worst environmental disasters ever to descend on our country, to consider whether that public policy statement made sense then and whether it makes sense now.

The consequences of that philosophy of unrestricted oil drilling, irrespective of the environmental concerns, irrespective of the need for reasonable and prudent regulatory oversight to protect the public from precisely this kind of unmitigated disaster, have now actually happened because a whole bunch of people in a position to know better put oil ahead of everything else, including the public interests.

I yield to my friend from New Jersey, Mr. HOLT. I thank the gentleman.

You spoke earlier about the liability, a very important principle that has been to some extent and should be to the full extent of American law in this area, which is, "polluter pays." That has been the basis of the Superfund program. That should be the basis for the oil liability legislation.

BP has said they will pay reasonable costs and that sort of thing. We shouldn't have to take their word for it. We shouldn't have to take the word of a company that has flagrantly cut corners in the past at huge cost to life and natural environment, whether you're talking about the Texas City refinery, whether you're talking about the blowouts on the North Slope of Alaska, whether you're talking about the blowouts on the pipeline in Alaska, whether you're talking about failure to level with the American public and even with the Coast Guard and the experts on how much oil was escaping from this very well. The number keeps shifting, and the oil company, I think, has not been fully forthcoming.

So this company asks us to take their word for it that they will pay, that they will pay for the cleanup, that they will pay for the environmental damages, they will pay for the economic damages and dislocation. I want

that established in law. The liability limit should be raised to many billions of dollars, if there is a limit at all.

Now, some here in the Congress, particularly from the other side, have said, "Well, but you'll drive out the mom-and-pop, you'll drive out the small independents." Well, you have to have the ability to prevent and repair and pay for any damages when you go into business.

The point of the oil liability legislation is not to protect small businesses; it's to protect our environment and the life of American citizens and the well being and economic opportunities for American citizens. And that means that the consideration should be how much damage can be done, and the liability limit should be large enough to cover the damage that can be done, not to ask whether this is going to put too much of a burden on a small company. The consideration should be, what is the damage? And there should be adequate liability to cover that.

I'm hopeful that, in the next week or so, we will raise this liability limit from the laughably small number of \$75 million to at least \$10 billion. And I thank the gentleman for joining me in this effort. The American public is crying for it. They want to know that in law and in fact BP will be held responsible for the damage they have done.

□ 1745

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I thank my colleague from New Jersey. Again, I thank him so much for his participation tonight and for his leadership, especially in leading us in a legislative remedy.

I want to end with this: on June 10, 2008, one of our colleagues actually said the following:

There are 3,200 oil rigs off the coast of Louisiana. During Katrina, not a single drop was spilled. Actually, 600,000 gallons were spilled, but more than 7 billion barrels have been pumped from these wells over the past quarter century. Yet only 1-1/1000th of 1 percent was spilled. We would suggest that JOHN MCCAIN revisit his reservations about ANWR and run against the "drill nothing" Congress. Energy development and the environment are not mutually exclusive. In fact, this Republican colleague said, we would suggest that the first joint town hall

meeting with Barack Obama, proposed by MCCAIN, be held on one of those offshore Louisiana rigs.

Surely, I hope our colleague did not mean this rig, the one that blew up, caught on fire, cost a number of lives, and led to the largest environmental disaster in American history.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. TOWNS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOLT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MALONEY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, June 17.

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, June 17.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, June 17.

Mr. BOOZMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, June 14, 15, 16, and 17.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, June 14, 2010, at 12:30 p.m., for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Speaker-Authorized Official Travel during the third quarter of 2009 and the second quarter of 2010 pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, JENNIFER M. STEWART, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 29 AND MAY 4, 2010

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Jennifer M. Stewart	4/30	5/01	Qatar		164.00		8,578.00				8,742.00
	5/01	5/02	Afghanistan		78.00						78.00
	5/02	5/03	Pakistan		262.00						262.00
Committee total					504.00		8,578.00				9,082.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.