

in advancing this 21st century approach to drug policy.

BARACK OBAMA,
THE WHITE HOUSE, April 24, 2013.

HELPING SICK AMERICANS NOW ACT

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to begin our discussion with H.R. 1549, which will be up tomorrow, Helping Sick Americans Now Act.

I am not supporting this bill because the bill's proposals are counterintuitive to the anticipated outcome of the Prevention and Public Health Fund. This legislation strips 4 years of funding from the prevention fund to pay for a very short extension of a new enrollment in the preexisting condition insurance plan.

Further, the bill insists on a partisan offset that effectively eliminates the Prevention and Public Health Fund through 2016 to, instead, reopen the Federal High-Risk Pool Program provided by the Affordable Care Act through the end of the year.

While I support reopening the high-risk pool, I cannot support how this bill goes about creating the funding.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it's good to be in the people's House this afternoon to talk about a topic that is of utmost concern to the American people—energy. What does it mean for America? We all put gas in our cars, we all heat and cool our homes, businesses across this country power their manufacturing processes. So what does energy mean for today and for the future of our country?

I'm proud to be a member of the House Energy Action Team because we understand the critical role that domestic-energy production plays not only today, but in the future of our country. Let me give an example of why this is so important.

I remember one of the very first memorable events that occurred in March of 2011 in my first term. We were addressed here in this Chamber by the

Prime Minister of Australia. And in her remarks she commented, she said: "I remember being a young girl, sitting on the floor of my living room, watching Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin land on the Moon." She went on to talk about how America and Australia had stood side by side, how America had actually stood in front of and protected Australia during some of the darkest days of World War II in the Pacific.

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At the end of her speech, she said, "Back when I was a little girl and when I saw that Moon landing, I thought to myself, wow, those Americans can do anything." She wrapped up her comments by saying, "Today, as Prime Minister of Australia, with a lot of experience under my belt, I still believe that Americans can do anything."

When you stop and think about the Moon landing—and I know you're going to say, Well, what does that have to do with energy? I'm getting to that. President Kennedy gave us a vision of putting a man on the Moon in 10 years. We didn't make it in 10 years. We made it in less than 10 years. The reason that we did was that every fabric of our society bought into the idea—academic institutions, the scientific community. Industries cropped up overnight. Millions of jobs were created. Young people lined up to get into academic programs in which they could major in degrees that would prepare them for careers in space exploration.

At the end of the day—actually, we're not at the end of the day—we're still benefiting from the innovation and the technological advance that came out of that era. It was a time when America's imagination was captivated by what many thought was impossible and by what the rest of the world didn't really think we could do. You look at what has happened since we started that journey—at all of the technological innovations that have occurred: cell phones, flat-screen TVs, GPS, even arthroscopic surgery. We had to learn to perform medical procedures on space travelers in a way that was noninvasive, and medical experts began to think about "how do we do that in outer space?" So we learned how to dream, and that goal to put a man on the Moon captivated America's imagination.

I want you to think for a second about what would happen if America once again embarked on a journey of that magnitude. I believe a journey to become energy independent and secure in America is just such a journey that we could embark on. A vision of energy independence and security would not only captivate the imagination of the American people but it would put America back to work at a time when our economy is in such desperate need of private-sector economic growth. Imagine what would happen if we had a national energy vision that sounded something like this:

We're going to go after the vast volumes of oil and natural gas that we have. In many experts' opinions, we've got more of it than anyone else has in the world. We're going to expand our nuclear footprint because nuclear energy is one of the safest, most reliable forms of energy on the planet. We brought that to the world, and we know how to do it. We're going to continue to mine coal, and we're going to learn how to use it environmentally soundly because we've got enough coal to fuel our energy needs for generations yet to come.

We're even going to embrace alternative forms of energy—biofuels, wind and solar. Now, they're not going to meet our heavy lifting energy needs for the foreseeable future, but there is a role that they play in our overall energy profile. We're going to back that up with action with the regulatory community and tell the regulators at the EPA and the Department of the Interior and at the Army Corps of Engineers: effective today, you start being partners in progress with America's energy industries. Rather than being the department of "no," learn how to find a way forward. If a particular project or if a particular technology presents concerns, then let's address those concerns, but "no" should not be the final answer.

We've learned through the lessons of putting a man on the Moon that, when Americans are allowed to dream, when they're allowed to innovate, when they're allowed to compete, there is nothing that we can't solve.

Why is energy independence and security so important? First of all, it's important because of national security. Right now, today, we are beholden to some countries that don't like us very much for our energy resources. Why do we want to continue to do that when we have the resources right here at home to be able to solve that problem?

In order to captivate the imagination of the American people, we've got to help the American people understand why this is so important to them. We talk about energy in terms of very important projects like the Keystone XL pipeline of which the President, himself, said that the environmental concerns were overexaggerated, so let's get the project approved.

Yet we talk about it in technical terms—pipelines, hydraulic fracturing, oil rigs, nuclear reactors, uranium enrichment. What does all of that mean to American taxpayers—to working Americans who are just struggling day in and day out to make ends meet?

Here is what it means:

Take a manufacturing process, the manufacturing of cereal, Pop-Tarts—you name it, whatever our children consume today. When domestic energy costs are reduced, those manufacturing costs to produce those goods are also reduced. When the price of diesel fuel goes down and when the cost of the transportation to transport those goods from the manufacturers to the

grocery stores goes down, those savings are passed on in the costs of the products to the consumers. When working mothers and single moms and single dads who are trying to make ends meet—who are trying to figure out how they're going to put kids through college, how they're going to buy the next pair of tennis shoes—are balancing the checkbooks and when they see that their energy costs to heat and to cool their homes are going down and that they're paying less to fill up their cars to go back and forth to work, that translates into economic confidence to do the kinds of things that we were able to do during that remarkable period of putting a man on the Moon.

Today, we've got a lot of naysayers out there who simply don't understand how important this is, this idea of energy independence and security to the American people, and they're trying to frighten the American people.

Hydraulic fracturing, my goodness. We've been doing hydraulic fracturing in America for over 60 years, over a million such operations. A former EPA administrator, herself, acknowledged there has not been a single incident in which hydraulic fracturing has contaminated the water table. Yet the EPA is working hard to try and insert itself into a process that many, many States are already doing and are already doing very well. Take, for example, the State of Ohio where I come from. Literally, my district sits on top of the Marcellus and the Utica shales, one of the world's largest reservoirs of oil and natural gas.

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The State of Ohio has been regulating the oil and gas industry since 1965. We're among those States that have done a lot of hydraulic fracturing, and yet again there is not one proven instance where that process has contaminated drinking water, yet you've got those that sit on the sidelines and try to frighten homeowners, try to frighten those people that live in Appalachian Ohio that their water is going to be contaminated. It's not. It's a proven process.

And just over the last 5 years, we've developed technology called horizontal hydraulic fracturing, where we can go down a mile and then go out horizontally another mile, sometimes more, and have much more of that vital resource of oil and natural gas flowing to the surface, resources that are going to move America one step closer to energy independence and security.

Mr. Speaker, we've got an opportunity to put America back in charge of our economic destiny and an energy vision that is a real all-of-the-above energy vision for this country. It's what America needs.

At this time, I'd like to yield time to my colleague from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Folks in South Carolina are concerned

about where we are with energy in this country. Energy independence is something that's on the minds of folks back home.

You know, I drive a diesel truck, and the gentleman from Ohio was talking about diesel fuel just recently. When I was at the fuel pump recently fueling my truck with diesel fuel, I was paying about \$3.85 a gallon. It dawned on me, as I watched the 18-wheelers roll by coming from the pumps where they filled up, that if we were able to really achieve American energy independence and we were able to lower the cost at the pump for America's truckers and all of America's families—but I use trucking as an example. If we could truly lower the cost of diesel fuel for America's truckers by just \$1, if we could produce enough American energy resources to lower diesel fuel from that \$3.85 a gallon that I was paying down to \$2.85 a gallon—those 18-wheelers that were rolling by I believe had 400-gallon diesel tanks.

Think about that, America. Think about if that truck or that trucking company was able to save \$400 per fill-up for that 18-wheeler, and think about the number of trucks you pass on America's interstates and highway systems. If we could save that, think about the trickle-down effect that that would have for consumer products.

We're not just talking about gasoline and diesel fuel. The American hydrocarbons that are produced when they're refined, they're refined into a lot of different products. And I would ask folks to research what a barrel of hydrocarbon or fossil fuel, oil, when you put that under extreme pressure, the heat created, how it separates out and all the different products that come from a barrel of oil. It's an amazing component that God has given us.

In South Carolina, we understand that the Nation can achieve American energy independence; but we also understand that if we can't have American energy independence, why not an all-American energy strategy where we work with our neighbors to the north, our largest and best trading partner, the Canadians, or we work with the Mexicans and the folks to the south with a transboundary agreement; allow that area where the boundary between Mexico and the United States is, that we can drill in that area and we have an agreement for revenue sharing on the oil produced there.

But let's go back to our neighbors in the north, our largest and best trading partner. The former speaker of the house from South Carolina, David Wilkins, was Ambassador to Canada under the Bush administration. I spent a lot of time with Speaker Wilkins, Ambassador Wilkins, and we talked about Canada and we talked about the oil sands. This was before the Keystone XL pipeline.

But let's focus on the Keystone XL pipeline to bring that Canadian oil to American refineries that are sitting there with the capacity to refine that

Canadian oil. What do I mean by capacity? It's idle capacity. It's capacity that could be utilized to refine American resources or Canadian resources coming down to those refineries, refining that into the products that we enjoy as America.

That's why the Keystone XL pipeline is so important. Let's put Americans to work. We hear a lot about job creation and putting Americans to work. Well, this truly would. Mr. Speaker, this Keystone XL pipeline would put Americans to work in those refineries, refining that oil into all the chemicals and gasoline products and everything that we use out of a barrel of hydrocarbons or a barrel of oil. The Keystone pipeline is something that should happen in this country.

The opponents on the other side say: Well, that oil is just going to flow from Canada. It's going to flow through the United States. It's going to go to our refineries. But those contracts have been let, and that oil and those gasoline products are going to be used in other markets. It will not do anything to affect the price at the pump here.

That's what the other side says.

Here's a simple economic example:

It's supply and demand. Global demand is high right now, and the supply is low. The supply is low for a lot of reasons: the OPEC cartel and other things. Policies, moratoriums, and other things from this administration keep global supply down.

Let's assume that the oil from Canada does flow through the United States, refined at our refineries, and does flow out of this country. So what? That increased supply will meet the increased demand. And by meeting that demand, that will drive the price down, not only for Americans, but for everyone across the globe.

It's the right thing to do to put Americans to work to refine that oil into those products at American refineries. It's true job creation.

While we're on the subject of job creation, Mr. Speaker, and the gentleman that's heading up the House Energy Action Team, which is focused on an all-American energy strategy and American energy independence, while we're talking about job creation, let's talk about my State of South Carolina.

We've been excluded in the next 5-year plan, the plan that would allow offshore drilling off our coast on the Outer Continental Shelf. Right now, folks, the whole Atlantic shelf is off limits to drilling, with the exception of a very proactive State of Virginia, which has been able to include Virginia's offshore area in the next 5-year plan. We'll see if that comes to fruition.

But South Carolina is sitting there saying, with a lot of the other Atlantic States, We believe we have some resources off our coast. We believe there's natural gas off the coast of South Carolina. Let's allow South Carolina's offshore area to be included in the next 5-year plan.

What does that mean? Does that mean we're going to rush right out there and punch a hole in the Earth and start producing? Maybe; maybe not. What it does mean is that it allows that exploration. It allows those energy companies to say: You know what? That area is going to be opened up. We haven't explored out there in 30 years. It was 30-year-old technology when we went out there before. Let's go out there with new technology. Let's find out what sort of resources might be off the coast of South Carolina on the Outer Continental Shelf of the Atlantic seaboard. Let's go out there. Let's find out what might be there, and let's start producing that.

You know what happens when we do start producing? I just ask you to drive down to Louisiana and get on Highway 90 from Lafayette down to New Iberia and down to Houma and Thibodaux and those areas. You get on that four-lane highway, Mr. JOHNSON, and you ride down that highway, on both sides of the four-lane highway, business after business after business after business—and I could go on and on. These are businesses that aren't out there actually doing the drilling because those lease sales were to ExxonMobil or Halliburton or some of those companies. These are the service companies that are servicing offshore drilling.

Think about this for a minute. Think about the guys that are using the barges and the offshore boats that carry the service boats that are taking the drilling mud and the casing and the piping and the diesel fuel for the generators and the food and the personnel and everything else that goes offshore out to the platform. Then think about this: they're companies on shore. They're running trucks up and down the road that need truck repair; they need body repair. We need pipe welders and pipe fitters.

Like I said, business after business after business there in Louisiana is helping the offshore industry.

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And South Carolina is sitting there going, Well, you know what? If we allowed drilling offshore and we allowed this to happen on the Outer Continental Shelf, then maybe those businesses would come to South Carolina—the service boats, the drilling mud, the providers of the onshore pipe fitters and pipe boilers. And you know what? Those guys have to eat. And so they fill up the local restaurants and they shop at the local Piggly Wiggly. And guess what. They give to the United Way and they give to the local church, and it's a trickle-down economy when you've got people working and you've got people creating businesses and providing income to an economy.

When we think about an all-American, energy-independent energy structure, we need to think about all of the jobs that are created through that American energy independence; and

it's not just the guys that are doing the offshore drilling, and it's not just the guys that are doing the hydraulic fracturing here. That is a tremendous component, and it's working in Pennsylvania, and should be working in southern New York. It's working in Ohio. It's producing resources.

When we talk about energy, we focus a lot right now on North Dakota. North Dakota, my gosh, it's a microcosm of what we could be in this country if we truly pursued an American energy policy. North Dakota, 3 percent unemployment or less. Some say it's a negative unemployment. I say, when you get off an airplane in North Dakota, they give you a job whether you need one or not. You talk about a lack of housing; they don't have housing for people coming up there to take the jobs. If you need a job in America and you're willing to travel to North Dakota, you can go up and get \$70,000 a year driving a water truck. Jobs are created.

North Dakota, a microcosm of what we could be in this country if we truly pursued an all-American energy policy, and that includes hydraulic fracturing. That includes drilling on Federal land that is currently off-limits to energy exploration, energy production, but it's also off-limits to wind and solar. Federal land that you own—America. The American taxpayers own this Federal land, and it ought to be utilized to the maximum benefit for American taxpayers.

Folks, we can reduce our fuel prices at the pump. We can reduce your prices for electricity at home, and that's through an American energy policy that's truly all of the above.

And so I appreciate the gentleman from Ohio leading this leadership hour, giving me an opportunity to speak about something that I am very passionate about, and that is an all-American energy policy that produces resources here, lessens our dependence on the Middle East, lessens our dependence on the OPEC cartel, truly trades with our neighbors to the north and the south, and approaches true independence.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. I thank my colleague from South Carolina, and at this time I yield to our chairman from Texas (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding me time.

As chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I would like to focus my remarks on the role of science and technology in Republicans' all-of-the-above energy strategy.

The Science Committee has oversight responsibility in two relevant areas. The committee oversees \$8.5 billion of the Department of Energy's research and development funding.

If we want to ensure that Americans have access to the affordable and reliable energy they need, we must strengthen DOE scientific research programs and EPA scientific integrity

principles. And that is what we intend to do this Congress.

As part of this process, the Science Committee expects to reauthorize the America COMPETES Act. A central component of that legislation is \$5 billion to the Department of Energy Office of Science, which maintains world-class research facilities through the National Laboratories. The office also supports innovative research that will help transform how we produce and consume energy.

We will also pursue energy legislation that improves prioritization and management of specific programs, from energy efficiency and renewable energy to nuclear, coal, oil, and natural gas.

The Science Committee recently received testimony that highlighted the massive costs and duplication of Federal subsidies for alternate forms of energy. The administration should not pick winners and give subsidies to favored companies that promote uncompetitive technologies. This too often leads to waste and bankruptcy, as we witnessed with Solyndra and other companies. Instead, we should focus our resources on research and development that will produce technologies that will enable alternative energy sources to become economically competitive without the need for subsidies.

Finally, we need to fix the EPA, which continues to levy numerous regulations that burden employers. Under the Obama administration, the EPA has aggressively sought to regulate nearly every aspect of the energy industry. It implements rules that burden employers and kill jobs. Insulting the taxpayers who fund the EPA, the administration refuses to release the scientific data upon which these burdensome regulations are based. This is entirely inconsistent with the President's stated commitment to lead the most open and transparent administration in history. The committee will continue to work to ensure that the EPA lives up to the President's transparency standard. The American people deserve to know all the facts, particularly since EPA regulations on the energy sector have a direct impact on their daily lives.

For example, the EPA has opposed a technological innovation that provides good-paying jobs for many Americans. The fracking revolution is changing the nature of American energy production. Hundreds of communities directly benefit from the economic turnaround due to energy production made possible by the fracking technology. These locations range from North Dakota to Pennsylvania to Texas. These States' household income growth and low unemployment is a direct result of revolutionary technology developments combined with sound energy policy and oversight at the State level.

Madam Speaker, on the Science Committee, we aim to ensure that Americans reap the benefits of this current energy technology revolution, and the Science Committee will do its part.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, may I inquire how much time we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BLACK). The gentleman has 31 minutes remaining.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to yield to my colleague from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH).

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Thank you so much for yielding as we talk about the importance of American energy independence and using all of our fuels and all of the above. I know that we all want to use all of the above, but there are a lot of people who want to put regulations so strict on coal that you can't use it anymore.

I hold up for you tonight the commemorative scissors that I used to cut the ribbon, along with a number of other people, at the Dominion Resources power plant in Virginia City, Virginia. And it wasn't 10 years ago; it wasn't 5 years ago. It was last September.

That plant would not be able to be built today if the regulations proposed by the EPA are actually adopted. Those would be the regulations relating to greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide.

When that plant was opened, they were so proud, and rightfully so. They had spent a lot of money, and they had the best technology available—the best technology available in the world—one of the cleanest plants ever opened to create electric power at a reasonable cost using the natural resources that God gave the United States of America, to use our coal supply in an appropriate, efficient manner.

Now, everybody says coal is dirty and we shouldn't use it; but we can use it in clean ways, like they're doing in the Dominion plant. I would also point out to you that as we send jobs away, are we really making any progress?

I note from one of the reports we've gotten from the Energy and Commerce Committee that at one point in time not too long ago the United Mine Workers estimated that job losses with the EPA targeting coal units due to utility MACT and tighter greenhouse gas standards could cost us more than 50,000 direct jobs in the coal, utility, and rail industries; and indirectly, a figure costing us jobs of more than 250,000 jobs lost.

That doesn't make a lot of sense because what we're doing is we're making it impossible to use our coal, where we, in fact, have the largest reserves of anywhere in the world. We are the Saudi Arabia of coal, and we don't want to use it, but many of the other nations of the world, including China, do want to use coal, and they are using coal. What's interesting about that is, when you look at that, looking at a report from the Sustainable Use of Coal and Pollution Control Policy in China, dated 2009—and this was a group of folks looking at what they can do to continue to use coal in China; it's an

international group trying to figure out what to do—they point out that, in China, the fraction of power capacity with unit scale smaller than 100 megawatts is 24.8 percent in 2007, while it is only 7 percent in the U.S. in 2007. The average coal consumption per unit powered electricity supply in China is 11 percent higher than that of Japan.

□ 1600

So what we're looking at is a situation where they're using more coal to produce the same power than we are, by about 24.8 percent for them and 7 percent in the United States. And when you get down to the pollution, you're looking at 30 percent to 150 percent higher than that in the United States.

Further, they go on to talk about the boilers, related to the maximum achievable control technology in boilers. And it says normally the thermal efficiency for boilers is between 72 and 80 percent, which is close to the design level of developed countries.

But, in reality, most of the actual thermal efficiencies are between 60 to 65 percent, which means they're 10 to 15 percent lower than the identified thermal efficiencies of boilers, which means, in effect, they're 30 to 40 percent less efficient, 30 to 50 percent less efficient than boilers in most of the developed countries.

So here's what we're doing, folks. We're taking the jobs from the United States; we're sending them over to China and other countries like India and so forth. They're producing the electricity to produce the goods that we used to produce in the United States. They're doing it less efficiently; they're creating more pollution. And, as a NASA study showed, it takes 10 days to get from the middle of the Gobi Desert, for that air to transport across the Pacific, 10 days from the middle of the Gobi Desert in China to the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Folks, we have to be careful with the policies we make here. We all want clean air. We all want clean water. But we also want jobs, and we have to recognize the United States cannot solve this problem by itself. We must solve it with others working with us; and when they're not willing to start down that path and to make a good-faith effort, we have to recognize that we should be as efficient as we can be.

But we shouldn't be killing American jobs based on American energy when we know we can do it better and have less pollution than they can do it in other parts of the world.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. I thank my colleague. I yield some time now to our colleague from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD).

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to point out that affordable American-made energy is the key to economic growth, economic development, and bringing this country out of the grips of the tough economic types that we're in.

I'm blessed to represent south Texas. The district I represent covers some

land that's part of the Eagle Ford Shale. There's a big oil and gas play going on there.

You know, it's not just the oilmen that are doing well. It's the restaurateurs that are doing well. I've never seen so many brand-new white pickup trucks. Some of this Texas oil and gas money is helping out the folks in Detroit: General Motors, Dodge, Ford. Some of these guys are even buying the Toyota trucks made in San Antonio, Texas.

It's an economic boom where we're actually struggling to find people to work. You can go to work in a fast-food restaurant for \$15 because they're competing with the oil and gas industry.

And you know what else is happening?

The low-cost natural gas that's abundantly available, they're saying 100 years' supply in Texas is creating new factories for manufacturing. In Corpus Christi alone, we've got two different steel mills coming in and using that gas to fire their plant. We're looking at a new plastics facility coming in.

And numerous other industries throughout the entire Texas coast, and even further inland, are realizing that affordable, American-made energy makes the United States competitive again. Even with the higher wages that we pay our employees in countries like China, with our low-cost energy, we can beat that.

Natural gas in the United States, especially in south Texas, we're in the \$4 range. If you were to buy that same natural gas and have it in Japan, it's \$18. We've got a huge opportunity here. We've got a huge economic advantage.

House Republicans, myself included, we support an all-of-the-above energy, and the technology is going to come. We're going to get the technology for wind. We're going to get the technology for solar. We're going to get the storage technology in batteries.

All that stuff Chairman SMITH was talking about that's going on with the Department of Energy and the Science and Technology Committee, those technologies are coming. But as we've seen with things like Solyndra and the tax credit that goes to wind farms, they're not economical today.

We have low-cost fossil fuel that will bridge us until those technologies are ready for prime time and ready to go. We need to take advantage of it. We need to open up the infrastructure with things like the Keystone pipeline. We need to open up Federal land so we can charge a royalty to the oil and gas companies for producing that on Federal land. That will bring money into the Federal budget that we could use for a wide variety of things: lowering the deficit, repairing our decaying infrastructure needs.

We need to be a country of "yes" to all-of-the-above energy, and it will solve our economic crisis, and we will have a better life for every single American.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. I thank the gentleman. At this time, we'll go to my colleague from Arkansas (Mr. GRIFFIN).

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of natural gas production to America's energy security.

Natural gas production is a critical part of a new economy, a new economy where energy costs are lower. In fact, there have been several articles lately that talk about manufacturing plants in Europe moving to the United States because of lower energy costs, because of the lower cost of manufacturing products using low-cost natural gas.

And, also, recent studies have shown that our greenhouse gases in the United States are lower because of more natural gas use.

My home State of Arkansas is an energy-rich State, and the Fayetteville shale play has helped fuel our State's economy. It's one of the biggest deposits of natural gas in the United States. It spans approximately 4,000 square miles. It's estimated to contain up to 20 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. It's considered one of the most productive shale plays in the country.

But what does that mean for everyday Americans? What does it mean, what has it meant for Arkansans?

Well, natural gas production is providing high-paying jobs for folks in my State and my district. According to the University of Arkansas, the average annual pay in the oil and gas extraction industry was \$74,000 in 2010. That's good pay. That's money that pays for food on the table, for a kid's education. That's twice the average pay of all industry in the State of Arkansas.

Further, the Fayetteville shale play supports over 20,000 jobs. It's added \$12 billion to Arkansas' economy since 2008. That impacts families.

Across the country, though, you've heard some detractors. These individuals have spread exaggerations, in some case, falsehoods about the environmental impacts of natural gas extraction through fracking.

And I want to point out that President Obama's own U.S. Geological Survey recently produced an important report that highlights the safety of natural gas production in Arkansas. Now, you're probably not hearing a lot about it, but it's an important study that was done in conjunction with Duke University and the University of Arkansas.

In January of this year, they published a study entitled "Shallow Groundwater Quality and Geochemistry in the Fayetteville Shale Gas Production Area."

What's the point of this study? The point of this study is that they tested groundwater, and they found that what's going on in the Fayetteville shale is environmentally safe.

The yearlong study examined the water quality of 127 shallow wells in the Fayetteville shale play. The report concluded there's no indication of systemic regional effects on shallow groundwater. This supports the understanding that natural gas production is safe for our environment and communities.

And as the father of two young children, I recognize the importance of ensuring that our air's clean and that our water's clean.

We must always seek to ensure that energy development is undertaken responsibly, but this report is an inconvenient truth for many out there who oppose fracking, which has given us so much natural gas and a competitive advantage.

Mr. Speaker, we must support the continuation of environmentally sound natural gas production in the United States to ensure our energy independence and further decrease our reliance on foreign sources of energy. It is absolutely critical to grow our economy so that families across the country can put food on the table and pursue happiness in this great country.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. I thank my friend.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire about how much time we have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 28 minutes remaining.

□ 1610

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. I would like to now yield to my colleague from Texas (Mr. OLSON).

Mr. OLSON. I thank my colleague from the Buckeye State. Ohio has always been a coal State. Now, with the Utica Shale plate, it's an oil and gas State.

Mr. Speaker, the HEAT Team is back for the 113th Congress. I'm proud to be joining the HEAT Team—the House Energy Action Team—as we talk about a dream: American energy independence. As part of that goal, I'll be talking this afternoon about power generation and grid reliability.

In Texas, bigger is always better. Texas got bigger than any State in the last 10 years. We did it for simple reasons: no state income tax; a right to work State; commonsense regulations; and cheap, reliable energy. To sustain that growth, we need five new large power plants in the next 2 to 3 years. It could be a matter of life and death. If we have a power crisis such as the heat wave like we had in August of 2011, when the entire State was over 100 degrees for all 31 days of that month, if that happens again, in the next 1 or 2 years, power may go out over the State, with rolling brownouts, rolling blackouts. That could be life and death for the elderly, the young, the poor.

The Obama administration's obstacles to fossil fuels is our greatest challenge. Radical environmentalists have killed two new, large power plants. One is the Las Brisas power plant near Corpus Christi, and the second is the White Stallion Power Plant, a coal plant, near Bay City, where we have two nuclear reactors. Las Brisas was like coal. It used petroleum coke to refine that to make it energy. Now we'll export that energy source overseas.

We need options to make sure that mothballed power plants can come back on line if we need them in a crisis.

But as we've seen in the past, these power plants run the risk of being sued for exceeding their environmental limitations from the EPA. I have reintroduced a bill, H.R. 271, in this Congress. It passed in the last Congress unanimously in the Energy and Commerce Committee, of which I'm a member. It passed unanimously on this floor last Congress. It's coming back in committee sometime in the next couple of weeks.

By passing this bill, we send a simple message: if the person or entity that runs the power grid tells you to keep that power plant up and running, and you exceed the EPA limitations, you cannot be held liable for exceeding the limitations when some government agency has told you to keep the power plant up and running. That's common sense.

I thank my colleague. I'm glad to be here because we have a chance again to make our country energy independent.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. I yield now to my colleague from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. VALADAO. In addition to our rich agricultural land, California's San Joaquin Valley is also blessed with an abundance of oil, natural gas, and renewable energy sources. These resources should be utilized to create jobs, lower energy costs for American families, and reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign energy. Instead, misguided public policy and overreaching Federal regulations have cost the Central Valley thousands of jobs and increased the price at the pump for all Americans.

Over the last several years, there have been dramatic changes in the energy policy of the United States. And as result, energy prices have significantly increased. Cap-and-trade legislation failed to pass the House in 2009. However, Washington bureaucrats have already implemented several parts of cap-and-trade through erroneous EPA regulations. These regulations put limitations on carbon emissions, diminishing oil and gas production in my district.

Since 1976, the number of environmental regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations has increased 25-fold. Regulations developed and enforced by the Environmental Protection Agency have had a devastating effect on energy production in the Central Valley as the EPA and other members of the Federal environmental bureaucracy continue to wage war on energy producers, costing California thousands of high-quality, good-paying jobs. By taking advantage of the natural resources in California, we can provide Americans with quality jobs, restore our economy, and reduce the struggle families face every day due to high energy costs.

The most efficient path toward reducing our dependence on foreign oil and lowering energy costs is an all-of-the-above approach that includes conventional sources of energy as well as renewable energy sources such as

hydro, solar, and wind power. My district is home to a growing number of wind and solar farms. Developing market-based energy sources will help the United States meet its energy independence goals. However, in order to meet our country's energy demand, we must rely on a mix of traditional means while we continue to develop alternative energy solutions for the future.

Promoting energy production from California's Monterey Shale, located directly under my district, could bring in 2.8 million jobs and raise an additional \$25 billion in new revenues by the end of the decade. This would not only strengthen the local economy but the State's economy as a whole.

Natural gas is a safe and responsible energy source with high economic output. In 2010, over 22,750 jobs were created in California alone. Studies show that natural gas production will save each American household approximately \$926 per year between 2012 and 2015. Hydroelectric power accounts for 63 percent of the clean power in this country and 8 percent of total electricity. Expanding hydropower production would further increase our energy independence from foreign countries. The Central Valley has the available workforce to construct and operate hydropower facilities throughout the Sierra Nevadas, which would not only produce energy to be used by the entire country but also provide the Central Valley with the ability to store a clean, reliable water supply.

My home State of California, and the entire United States, has been blessed with abundant conventional and renewable energy sources. Our constituents should not have to make tough decisions regarding their daily energy consumption when our Nation has the ability to produce enough energy to meet their needs. They should be able to water their yards, cool their homes in the summer, and drive their children to school without facing expensive energy bills and high prices at the pump.

Mr. GARDNER. I thank the gentleman from California for his comments today and would point out that in just a little bit we're going to hear from one of the sponsors of a hydropower bill that will make a significant difference in this State. And something that we ought to be doing more of is taking advantage of that clean, renewable energy resource.

I would yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi, ALAN NUNNELEE.

Mr. NUNNELEE. I want to thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding.

America has been blessed with an abundance of natural resources. Because of private-sector innovations, we've seen a boom in energy development both on private lands and on State lands. Sadly, due to the Obama administration's extreme environmental agenda, in these same years we've seen a decline of energy recovery off of Federal lands. The most promi-

nent example of President Obama's prioritizing his radical environmental base over American energy development is the continued failure to approve the Keystone XL pipeline.

It's a sad commentary on the state of leadership in the modern-day Democratic Party compared with the record of men like President Kennedy. President Kennedy set out bold goals and then laid out ways of achieving those goals. He came to this very Chamber and challenged the elected representatives that before the decade is out, America would land a man on the Moon and return him safely back to Earth. America achieved President Kennedy's goals.

□ 1620

Now, given our resources from our friendly neighbors to the north, given American innovation, we should echo the challenge of President Kennedy. We should make it the goal of this generation that before this decade is out we become North American energy secure.

Now, there are vastly different undertakings between landing a man on the Moon and becoming energy secure, but the spirit required to achieve success in those areas is the same. The only thing standing between America and energy security for the future is an executive branch that's run by environmental extremists that are beholden to the wealthy liberal environmentalists.

Now, residents of Billionaires' Row in San Francisco can afford to indulge in fantasies of an economy run on windmills and solar panels. Meanwhile, men and women in Mississippi that are struggling to get to work know that it continues to break the better part of a \$100 bill to fill their car up with gas.

We, as elected officials who serve the people in need of affordable energy and a thriving economy, must deal with that reality. That's why I support an all-of-the-above approach. It does include renewable energy; but it also includes recovering American fossil fuels like oil, natural gas, recovering American coal that we can now burn cleanly without damaging the environment, and expanding nuclear energy, including small modular nuclear reactors used in the production of electricity. If we do that, America can be energy secure.

Mr. GARDNER. I thank the gentleman from Mississippi.

I now yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), who has been a sponsor of hydropower legislation to make this country stronger in terms of energy security.

Mr. TIPTON. I thank my colleague from Colorado for the time.

Mr. Speaker, we have a very simple question before us as Americans: When we're looking at young families struggling to be able to pay bills, senior citizens on fixed incomes wondering how they're going to be able to make that next payment to be able to heat their homes, or cool them as summer approaches, is it an appropriate time for

this Nation to seek what Jimmy Carter, in this very Chamber in 1976, challenged this country to do—to be able to achieve energy sufficiency? The answer can only be "yes."

The time is now for this Nation to be able to act. We see Americans struggling to be able to pay those bills. We're seeing Americans right now that are worried about being able to hold on to their jobs. This is an opportunity to be able to put Americans back to work and to be able to achieve that true energy self-sufficiency in this Nation. And it can be all-of-the-above.

In this last year, we passed a bill that I presented, planning for America's energy future, that enumerated that all-of-the-above strategy—wind, solar, hydroelectric energy, as well as coal, gas, our natural resources, to be able to develop them right here in America, to put our people back to work, and to be able to create that energy certainty.

When we look at this worldscape in which we currently live, the threats that are there, it is appropriate for this Nation to truly achieve energy self-sufficiency.

Through the bill that we just passed through the House of Representatives that my colleague noted, in the State of Colorado, through the ditches, the pipelines that have been built by the Bureau of Reclamation, we can generate as much electricity just in the State of Colorado as the Glen Canyon dam with small hydroelectric units. It can be that all-of-the-above strategy, but we also need to increase the production of our traditional fuel sources as well.

The time is appropriate. We have the resources and we have the technology to be able to do that. The question yet to be answered is: Will we rise to be able to actually meet that challenge?

As Americans, let us be committed to developing American energy on American soil, to be able to create American jobs, put Americans back to work, and to be able to create our own energy certainty at this time. The future of this country, the future for our children rely on those commonsense solutions. We're going to be putting them forward in this House. We're calling the American people and the Senate and the President to join us in that effort.

Mr. GARDNER. I thank the gentleman from Colorado.

May I inquire of the Speaker how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENTIVOLIO). The gentleman from Colorado has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. GARDNER. I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED), the chair of the Natural Gas and Manufacturing Caucus.

Mr. REED. I so appreciate the gentleman yielding time, my good friend from Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, I join this conversation tonight coming at it from a perspective of being the chair of the Natural Gas

Caucus and cochair of the Manufacturing Caucus here in Washington, D.C., caucuses that have cochairs on a bipartisan basis, where we're working together to try to figure out how we can become energy independent, but more importantly, Mr. Speaker, what this issue represents for the average American family.

What this represents, when we are developing domestic energy sources such as the natural gas boom across America that's coming out of our shale formations and our tight sands formation when it comes to oil, what this represents to manufacturing is it puts American manufacturers in a competitive position so that they can invest in manufacturing facilities here on American soil.

So what does that mean? What that means to every man, woman, and child out there in America right now is that we are sitting on the precipice of a manufacturing renaissance in America. This competitive edge that we are getting from developing our natural gas and oil resources here in America means that we're going to build plants. They're going to be putting people back to work for today and tomorrow and for generations to come.

We need to build things in America. That's what this represents. We have a report from PricewaterhouseCoopers: by 2025, we are talking 1 million manufacturing jobs.

There should be no dispute in this Chamber to join hands to make sure we develop the energy resource in a safe and responsible manner, but develop it for the sake of creating those jobs that put food on people's tables, put a roof over their heads, and take care of families for generations to come.

I appreciate my good friend from Colorado yielding the time to me today. I just have to say, American energy means Americans' national security, and it means American prosperity for Americans of today and tomorrow.

Mr. GARDNER. I thank the gentleman from New York.

Mr. Speaker, the other night when I was driving home from a meeting in one of my rural counties—it was about 8 o'clock, 9 o'clock at night, it was dark outside—I drove by a field of windmills. At nighttime, you can see that red light flashing across 100 wind turbines, and then of course the natural gas development that's taking place right next to it. So, Mr. Speaker, this Nation has an opportunity for energy security. It's not next year; it's now.

I thank my colleagues for joining this debate on American energy today and look forward to continued conversations throughout this year.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, thank you, Mr. JOHNSON for leading tonight's leadership hour on American energy. This is an issue of great importance to the people of Montana, and I'm glad we're having this discussion tonight.

1678. That's how many days it's been since the application to build the Keystone XL pipeline was filed.

It took Canada seven months to approve the pipeline. President Obama has taken over four and a half years.

Study after study has shown that not only is the pipeline safe—but it said to be the most advanced, state-of-the-art pipeline ever constructed.

And the benefits of constructing this pipeline go beyond just transporting oil.

Earlier this month, I was in Glasgow, Montana visiting NorVal Electric Co-op. Members of the co-op told me that they are going to be supplying electricity to pump stations for the KXL, allowing them to spread their cost burdens and hold rates steady for customers.

If Obama does not approve the Keystone pipeline, their customers will see upwards of a 40 percent increase in their utility rates over the next ten years.

This is a great example of how this will impact everyday Americans.

It will create thousands of jobs—at least 800 in my home state of Montana alone.

And the president still can't make a decision.

Last month, the U.S. State Department issued its Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Keystone XL Presidential Permit application, which confirmed what we already knew.

The Keystone XL Pipeline will have no significant impacts on the environment.

In fact, this is the fourth environmental review of the Keystone Pipeline—with a final report still to come.

Let me be clear—this project means jobs.

This project could directly create more than 800 good-paying jobs in Montana—and thousands more across the nation.

It means coming one step closer to North American energy independence. The Keystone XL would be able to move up to 830,000 barrels of oil per day. That's about half the amount that the U.S. presently imports from the Middle East.

And of the oil moved each day, 100,000 barrels will come from the Bakken formation, which spreads across Montana and North Dakota.

This isn't about politics—Republicans and Democrats alike support the pipeline.

This is about our nation's security. This is about lowering energy costs for American families. This is about American jobs.

After four and a half years of waiting on President Obama to approve the Keystone XL pipeline, enough is enough.

The American people deserve action on this job-creating project, not more of President Obama's delays.

That's why today, the House Natural Resources Committee voted to advance the Northern Route Approval Act.

This bill makes it possible for the pipeline to be constructed in its entirety by removing the need for a presidential permit for the northern portion of the Keystone XL pipeline.

With this approval, we are one step closer to getting this pipeline approved.

The construction of the Keystone XL pipeline means hundreds of good-paying jobs created for Montanans, it means millions of dollars injected into our economy, and it even means lower utility rates for Montanans—we can't afford to wait any longer.

Enough is enough. It's been 1678 days.

As a member of the House Energy Action Team, I urge President Obama to approve the

Keystone XL Pipeline. And, if he won't act, we will.

REREFERRAL OF H.R. 763, REPEALING ANNUAL FEE ON HEALTH INSURANCE PROVIDERS

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that H.R. 763 be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and, in addition, to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

KERMIT GOSNELL

(Mrs. BLACK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today outraged and deeply saddened by the heartbreaking story of the abortion doctor, Kermit Gosnell. This is the man currently on trial for the murder of eight people, seven of whom were newborns who were killed after surviving late-term botched abortions in his "house of horror" clinic.

But Gosnell didn't act alone. He had a host of silent co-conspirators who referred women to his practice knowing full well of the horrors that went on behind those closed doors. Meanwhile, the State boards gave Gosnell a free pass for 17 years by failing to inspect his clinic.

When asked about Gosnell's crime, our President tells us he has no comment. Where is your outrage, Mr. President? Are you too busy preparing your remarks for tomorrow night's Planned Parenthood fundraising gala?

My heart breaks that our country has reached a point where we are all not outraged by a practice that ends a beating heart and takes the lives of our most vulnerable in our society. May God forgive us.

□ 1630

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, it's an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to stand here once again and to anchor the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order with my distinguished colleague from the Silver State, STEVEN HORSFORD.