

and kept his actions consistent with his principles.

Senator Connolly, on behalf of all Iowans, I congratulate you on your legacy of service and wish you well in the future.

ENERGY SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, on Monday I had the opportunity to pump gas for some of my constituents in Battle Creek, Michigan. Experiences like these allow me to truly get a sense of what the good people of my district think about energy solutions.

The constituents I spoke with all wanted to know what Congress is doing to lower gas prices. Almost all of them want to see Congress work on an all-of-the-above energy policy.

High gas prices demand action. We need to put all energy options on the table: more drilling, more alternatives, more conservation. This Congress needs to get serious and work on a comprehensive plan that includes all of the above and ends our dependence on Middle East oil.

Sadly, House leadership refuses to allow any votes increasing American energy production. Last Friday, the Washington Post chided House leadership for stifling floor debate on offshore drilling.

Madam Speaker, it is time to engage in a forthright debate that gives the American people a chance to have their voices heard and, most importantly, solves America's energy crisis, ending our dependence on Middle East oil. Let's get it done.

DEMOCRATS ARE PROVIDING SOLUTIONS TO AMERICA'S ENERGY CRISIS

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

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, while Americans suffer pain at the pump, Republicans and President Bush continue every day to spew the same rhetoric about drilling, a move that would produce minimal savings in 10 years.

Democrats, on the other hand, are providing short-term and long-term solutions to America's energy crisis. We have repealed subsidies to profit-rich Big Oil, cracked down on price gouging, and invested in clean and renewable energy.

We realize that Americans are hurting now, and they can't wait 10 years for relief. So 2 months ago, Democrats forced President Bush to stop filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Now we are urging the President to release oil from the Reserve, which would provide relief at the pump within 2 weeks.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, President Bush and House Republicans are more interested in doing the bid-

ding of Big Oil than actually providing relief to the American consumer today. How else can you explain their fixation with giving Big Oil more land to drill on when they aren't using the 68 million acres they already have?

Democrats are taking our energy policy in a new direction, not one controlled by Big Oil.

DEFENDING ISRAEL AGAINST IRAN

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

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, we all know there is a growing Iranian threat, focused mostly on the people of Israel.

Earlier this year, JANE HARMAN joined my bipartisan letter with 70 Members of Congress calling for the U.S. to extend our full ballistic missile defenses to protect Israel.

Last night, the United States announced that we would make this key commitment. Secretary Gates told Defense Minister Barak that the first step will happen soon. America's most powerful radar, the X-Band, will soon defend Israel.

This is a historic step that sends a powerful message to Iran: A future attack on Israel will likely fail. Our two democracies are sticking together to ensure the safety of free peoples, even in the Middle East.

Yesterday's decision by America's defenders makes deterrence, diplomacy, and peace a much more likely future for the people of Israel.

HOUSE PASSES COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING BILL THAT WILL STRENGTHEN HOUSING MARKET AND ECONOMY

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, last week this House passed comprehensive legislation that will assist homeowners facing foreclosure and help strengthen the housing market and our overall economy.

This bill will help significant numbers of hardworking American families in danger of losing their home refinance into lower cost government-insured mortgages, and we can do this at no cost to the American taxpayer.

The bill also helps neighborhoods hardest hit by the foreclosure crisis by providing resources to allow cities and States to buy up and rehabilitate foreclosed properties. Today, these properties are driving down home prices, reducing State and local revenues, and destabilizing neighborhoods.

Madam Speaker, we simply cannot revitalize the economy without addressing our Nation's housing crisis. Last week, the Democratic Congress once again acted on the real challenges facing the American people.

GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF JOURNALISTS

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, journalists should be able to report the news without having to worry about getting arrested for not revealing their confidential sources. Our Nation needs a Federal shield law to further protect the freedom of speech and press.

Recently, several journalists have been arrested and jailed for not disclosing their anonymous sources. These arrests did not occur in foreign countries run by dictators but happened here in America. Putting journalists in jail for not confessing their sources tramples on the Nation's freedom of speech and freedom of the press. These freedoms in the first amendment are first because, without them, the rest are meaningless.

More than 30 States so far have passed laws that protect reporters from being required to testify and name confidential sources, but there is no Federal law.

The job of a journalist is to report the news and not be an arm of the government or controlled by our government. Law enforcement officials should not force journalists to gather information or find witnesses.

A free press means free and independent of government intrusion into the sources of reporters.

Madam Speaker, the country needs a Federal shield law because, instead of getting a reporter arrested, the truth should set them free.

And that's just the way it is.

TRIBUTE TO NICK DONOFRIO

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

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay tribute to Mr. Nick Donofrio who is retiring after 40 years of serving the IBM Corporation.

Nick has led many of IBM's major development and manufacturing teams, semiconductor and storage technologies, microprocessors, and personal computer servers. He's led the semiconductor development and manufacturing facility in Burlington, where he and his wife, Anita, raised two children, Nicole and Michael.

Throughout his career, Nick has focused sharply on advancing education, employment, and career opportunities for underrepresented minorities and women.

He served on boards in Vermont. He's received national awards, well-deserved, for his leadership. The National Education and Leadership Award from the Sons of Italy Foundation; the Mensforth International Gold Medal; Industry Week magazine's Technology Leader of the Year; the University of

Arizona's Technical Executive of the Year; and the Rodney D. Chipp Memorial Award by the Society of Women Engineers for his outstanding contributions to the advancement of women in the engineering field. In 2005, Nick was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Please join me in congratulating him on the beginning of his new career.

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GAS PRICES

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, we have a responsibility to our children and our grandchildren to solve this energy crisis. This is about American energy for our American economy to create American jobs and a better American quality of life.

I have urged my constituents to call the Speaker of the House and relay their opinion that they believe Americans want, need and serve some answers on energy policy. I tell you as I told them: Call the Capitol Hill switchboard. That number is 202-225-3121.

I suggested that you make their voices heard that we all want to make America more energy self-sufficient while protecting America's home-grown energy resources.

Congress ought not leave town for 5 weeks without a vote on real energy solutions. Businesses don't shut down for 5 weeks without finishing the job. Congress ought not close up shop when there is still work to be done to preserve our Nation.

THREE YEARS OF GOP ENERGY PLAN AND AMERICANS STRUGGLE WITH \$4 GASOLINE

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, it's been 3 years since the Republican Congress passed energy legislation they claimed would bring down the cost of gasoline and end our dependence on foreign oil. The result? Gas prices have hit \$4 a gallon and a barrel of crude oil has gone from \$30 to \$150 a barrel.

Still, Republicans continue to propose the same failed policies and continue to block Democratic efforts to invest in renewable energy and to release oil from the government stockpile.

Republicans say they want to drill, but they voted against a bill that would force Big Oil to drill on 311 million acres of land already open for energy production. Republicans say they want to help struggling drivers with gas prices, but they voted against repealing unnecessary tax breaks for profit-rich oil companies.

Madam Speaker, BP Oil experienced a 28 percent hike in their profits this

quarter while American families can't afford to drive to work. When are Republicans going to start helping American families instead of Big Oil?

AMERICAN ENERGY ACT

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

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, as Congress prepares to depart for the August recess, I'm expecting to see more constituents around my district this August than usual. It isn't because they're anxious to visit with me; it's because many of my constituents can't afford to take vacations this summer due to the skyrocketing price of gas.

My Republican colleagues and I have offered a comprehensive energy plan in the form of the American Energy Act, which seeks to reduce the price of gas through increasing American energy production, enhancing energy efficiencies, and promoting renewable and alternative energy technology. Yet the majority party refuses to bring this commonsense bill up for a vote before we leave for recess because they are afraid it will pass. I wish my Democrat colleagues would apply this same illogic to some of their pieces of legislation.

It's unconscionable to punish the majority of the American people for the appeasement of out-of-touch environmental constituents. The American people deserve lower gas prices, and they deserve an up or down vote on the American Energy Act.

STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE

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

Mr. OLVER. Madam Speaker, high gas prices are taking a huge toll. Republicans claim they want to reduce gas prices, but for a month they have voted against every bill that would do so.

Last week, Republicans blocked a bill to release 70 million barrels from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Much smaller releases by the last three Presidents have produced nearly immediate reductions in crude oil prices of up to one-third. That would translate to savings as high as \$1 per gallon of gas. The Republican plan to lease more public land without requiring Big Oil to actually drill and produce oil gives exactly zero savings now.

Today, they will have a chance to vote against the speculation in oil futures. Experts have testified that rampant speculation accounts for roughly \$30 of the price of a barrel of oil, or 70 cents per gallon of gas. Isn't it time Republicans voted for 70 cent savings on gas prices by stopping speculation and \$1 savings by opening the Strategic Petroleum Reserve now?

ENERGY CRISIS

(Mr. KLINE of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KLINE of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, day after day, we come to this floor to address the important issues facing our Nation. A quick review, however, of the last few weeks shows we have voted on new names for post offices and to congratulate our sports teams. But Congress has not taken any real steps to address the rapidly rising price of gasoline and ease American's pain at the pump. And apparently, House Democrats again are not going to let Members vote to ease that pain.

This month, I have been touring energy facilities in Minnesota's Second District that highlight a variety of new, clean and reliable sources of energy being produced right there in Minnesota. I visited a hydropower plant on the Mississippi River in Hastings, a nuclear power plant in Welch, an energy-from-waste in Red Wing, an oil refinery in Rosemont, a wind turbine in Northfield, and an electric-generating facility in Faribault.

Madam Speaker, I visited all of these energy producers to learn more and to illustrate that we need an "all of the above" energy plan and we need to enact it now. Congress should not adjourn for 5 weeks of vacation and politics without dealing with the number one issue in the minds of the American people, high energy prices.

GAS STAMPS

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, a barrel of oil is still more than \$120 and the price Americans are paying for a gallon of gas is \$4.20 a gallon. Add that to the rising food prices and rising unemployment—especially long-term unemployment—and the economic climate feels more like the dead of winter than the middle of summer.

Too many Americans are still being forced to choose between food and fuel every day either to get to work or look for work. But we can help those at the bottom of the economic ladder survive by simply passing the Gas Stamps legislation I've introduced. It would provide modest assistance to people who need a helping hand to keep their head above water. It would provide temporary assistance over a relatively short time, a few months, like food stamps, and it would say to the American people that we, in Congress, know the first stimulus package was not enough and we're prepared to act again.

Providing those in need with a few hundred dollars a month for a few months is a small price to pay so that vulnerable Americans can continue to put food on the table and gas in their tank to go to work.

The American people need and deserve some additional help, and we ought to provide it with gas stamps, not the fraud of drilling on the coast.