

This will be the best bill in history for cycling, in no small measure due to the efforts of the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR). There is a program for safe routes to schools so our children can bike and walk to school safely at a time when we are concerned about morbidly obese junior high students. The fact that most communities are finding fewer and fewer children can get to school safely on their own, these will be welcome additions indeed.

This is the time for the House of Representatives to do its job. We need to send a clear signal that we support investing in America's transportation future. We need to make sure that we protect the basic framework of the ISTEA legislation so that it enhances the choices that communities have and provides incentives to properly plan it.

It is important that we think of this as the beginning of the reauthorization for TEA-4 because this framework is going to provide a floor. It is going to provide direction not just for this next 6-year reauthorization but it will be the framework to launch what happens in the subsequent reauthorizations as well. We do not want to be 6 years from now in the place where we have an administration that is threatening to veto even a modestly sized piece of legislation for America's future.

I urge my colleagues to support a motion to recommit this bill to establish the \$318 billion threshold the same as the Senate. I look forward to a debate this week that will help move America's economic and environmental program forward.

REQUIRE OPEC TO FOLLOW THE LAW

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the OPEC nations will meet to seal the deal on their collusion to restrict production of oil and drive up the price, damaging the U.S. economy, devastating U.S. consumers and other countries around the world.

Now, the Bush administration thus far has taken no action. Perhaps not too strange when you read about the long-enduring links between the Bush family and the rulers of Saudi Arabia, but still I would think in an election year we could at least get some modicum of action out of this administration.

Now Energy Secretary Abraham recently said the U.S. is not going to beg OPEC for oil. I agree. We should not beg. We should make them follow the law. This is an administration that is so big on the WTO and rules-based trade. I opposed the WTO. But when you are stuck in it, like we are, you ought to at least then use the rules that would be to the advantage of your people and your economy.

And the rules, there are rules in OPEC that prohibit what is being done in the WTO by the OPEC countries. There are 11 OPEC countries, six are members of the WTO, and two have applied to join. Therefore, since they are violating the rules of the WTO, the Bush administration should file a complaint.

It is quite easy to read. Article 11. "No prohibitions or restrictions other than duties, taxes, or other charges whether made effective through quotas, import or export licenses or other measures shall be instituted or maintained by any contracting party on the importation of any product of the territory of any other contracting party or on the exportation or sale for export of any product destined for the territory of any other contracting party."

Now that is legalese, but the bottom line it says is what those OPEC countries who are members of the WTO are doing to collude, to restrict production, to drive up the price of oil, to price-gouge Americans, violates the rules; and the Bush administration should file a complaint in the WTO on that issue.

I corresponded with the Bush administration last year. They came back after 6 months and said, well, there is an exclusion for a conservation of exhaustible natural resources. Well, that is true, except nobody in OPEC alleges that they are conserving exhaustible natural resources. They are very up front about it. They are trying to drive up the price. There is no conservation ethic there.

So that exclusion does not apply, particularly since the rules go on to say, disguised restrictions on international trade are prohibited. That is what this is. It is not a conservation exception.

So the Bush administration could use its favorite entity, the WTO, which it frequently uses for multinational corporations to enhance their profits, to degrade consumer protections, labor protections. They could use it now to protect the American economy, American consumers against price-gouging. They are not doing that, and one has to wonder why. I think it is because so they are so tight with the oil industry.

People say, wait a minute. The oil industry is buying oil. No, the oil industry has all these special deals with the OPEC countries. If the OPEC countries make big headlines and say they are rising the price of oil by 4 bucks a barrel, the oil industry applauds. Because what they then do is at the pump they raise it effectively 8 bucks a barrel; and then when American consumers, they complain, they point to OPEC and say we cannot do anything about it. It is those OPECers. They raised it. They raised it.

Well, if you look at the profits of the oil industry, they are up, phenomenal, yet the Republicans are proposing an energy bill that would subsidize the oil, gas, and coal industries, all of whom

are recognizing record profits. And they say that would be the solution.

Well, you are already subsidizing them by not taking action in the interest of the American people against the colluders, the price-fixers, at OPEC. There is no explanation for the inactivity of the Bush administration on this other than they are getting the support of that industry for their reelection. That is the only potential explanation of why they would abandon the American economy.

Because they are talking about the recovery is fragile, and it is just starting. Well, you heard from the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) earlier on that. There is not much of a recovery for most Americans. There is some recovery in profits, but with the outsourcing of jobs there are no new jobs here in the United States. But now they are sticking it to consumers and the few businesses that we have left that are trying to produce goods to export and every other business that is based in this country through these extortionate gasoline prices and the Bush administration has done nothing, zero, nada, zilch. Not one thing, not one action has been taken.

They are buying oil at these extortionate prices to put in the reserve, and they will not do anything about the high price. So they are gouging both taxpayers and consumers. It is a twofer for the Bush administration.

THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, later this week the House is on the verge of passing a \$2.3 trillion budget with a \$500 billion deficit, showing that it is impossible to finance three wars with three tax cuts.

This budget repeats the same mistakes that have resulted in a jobless economy and a wage recession here in America, with the lowest growth in wages in a period of economic growth ever in American history.

This budget continues the status quo economy, an administration that refuses to budge and change its failed policies that have led to nearly 3 million Americans unemployed since it has taken office, 43 million Americans who are working without health care, 4 additional million since they have taken office, 2 million Americans who moved from the middle class to poverty, nearly \$1 trillion worth of corporate individual bankruptcies and stagnant wages.

During the 2000 presidential campaign, President Bush declared that he opposed nation-building. Who knew it was America he was talking about. You would think if your results of your economic policies led to 3 or more million Americans without work, 43 million