

politics unique in its tone and compelling in its vision. You can be sure that this was only the start, and that the people will regain their rightful role in this democracy in the days and years to come.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE PROGRESS FOR AMERICA

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

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, I, too, am a new Member of Congress and proud to be part of an institution that has been the cradle of democracy, and very proud to be part of this new class of Republicans and Democrats that came here in the year 2007.

Mr. Speaker, in Vermont, and I think across America, average citizens were somewhat bewildered when they looked at what was happening in Washington. When they saw us go from a record surplus to a record deficit, the only conclusion they could come to was we had lost our way.

When they saw that the drug companies prevailed in actually getting legislation that prohibited price negotiation to get the best price for taxpayers and seniors, they thought America had lost its way.

When they saw that over the course of 9 years, Congress had allowed itself nine pay increases totaling \$31,000, but the minimum wage worker was stuck at \$5.15 an hour, they thought America had lost its way.

When they saw that when major legislation was brought before this body and the vote was extended for 3 or 4 hours in order to arm-twist, persuade people to change their votes, they thought Congress had lost its way.

I believe what this election was about across America was people in Vermont and people in districts from Vermont to California saying that they wanted Congress to start solving problems. What this 100 hours was about was making a down payment to America, where we are trying to give confidence to Americans that this Congress can do the work that needs to be done to improve the lives of average, everyday people. The strength of our democracy has always depended on a strong middle-class and opportunities for people at the low income level who want to climb the ladder of opportunity.

What we have done in this first 100 hours, frankly, working together with

many on the other side of the aisle, is establish that we actually can govern and we can pass legislation that will be meaningful. We have rejected politics as being about finding wedge issues that will divide us so that we can focus on economic issues that can unite us. And this is a beginning, it is not an end.

These first 100 hours, in my view, have been remarkable. We have changed the way Congress does business by enacting ethics reforms; no meals, no free trips, no free travel, and we did this with the support of 68 Republicans.

To return to fiscal responsibility, we adopted pay-as-you-go budgeting. That is going to impose itself on Republicans and Democrats, whether proposing spending increases for programs you favor or tax cuts you might want to advocate for. We did this with the support of 48 Republicans.

To help working families who have really been squeezed as our economy starts widening between those who have and everyone else, we passed cuts in student loan interest rates that will save the average student about \$4,400 over the life of the loan, and we did that with the support of 124 Republicans.

We passed, of course, the first minimum wage increase in 10 years, and that is going to help America's lowest paid workers, and we did that with all the Democrats and the support of 82 Republicans.

And on and on; on stem cell research, on the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, and the commonsense step of ending tax breaks for Big Oil that costs taxpayers \$14 billion, while it increased our dependence on foreign oil and put off the day when we embraced the challenge and obligation all of us know we have, to move towards alternative energy.

What we know is this: America has very severe challenges: Health care, 47 million Americans without it; health care for the Americans that do have it, that they are increasingly finding they can't afford; bringing our troops home from Iraq; restoring our budget to balance; moving in a new direction on energy.

What we know is true is that the only way we are going to solve those problems is if we work together. We are in it together, and it is by working together, as we have in these past 100 hours, that we can make progress for America.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BAIRD). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

THE REST OF THE STORY WITH REGARD TO THE DEMOCRATS' 100 HOURS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for half the time remaining before 2 p.m. as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, as always, I am profoundly pleased and honored to have the privilege to address you on the floor of the House of Representatives here in the United States Congress.

I have had the interesting observation here as I listened to the speakers that come from the other side of the aisle that there is another story, the rest of the story is out there, and a number of things need to be discussed, and one of them is what did we actually do here in the first 100 hours, as was referenced by at least three of the speakers.

In the first 100 hours, the point was made that they kept all of their promises that they would keep within the first 100 hours. We are going to disagree as to how we define that and what the results of it were, and I think it is appropriate in this democratic process that we have that is framed under this constitutional republic that we are, that we talk about and have open dialogue and debate. And that was one of the casualties, I would point out, Mr. Speaker, to this accelerated 100-hour process.

The 100-hour promise was something that sounded good politically. It had a nice ring to it. The bell tolled 100 hours, so therefore the image of accomplishing these things for America was going to get done in 100 hours.

Well, 100 hours can be counted a lot of different ways, and some people would have thought that at midnight, December 31, when you heard the band strike up Auld Lang Syne, then the 100 hours would begin and this harder working than ever Congress and more ethical than ever Congress and more open and more democratic than ever Congress was going to go to work, and in the first 4 days and 4 hours would accomplish these things.

No, I did not actually make that point either, Mr. Speaker. I think it is appropriate for us to have a real legitimate method of keeping track of the 100 hours. If that is going to be the one

promise that is sacrosanct, to accomplish these six things in the first 100 hours, then a legitimate clock is a good way to measure that.

So I put up a legitimate clock and kept track of the first 100 hours. And I am going to make this concession at this point, Mr. Speaker, that these six bills, H.R. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, were passed off the floor of this Congress within the first 100 hours of a legitimate clock.

My legitimate clock, and I am going to post this up here for the benefit of the people who are observing this process on the floor, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that a legitimate clock would be a clock that calculated from the moment we gavel in, the gavel in in the morning, the opening prayer, the pledge, and off into this process of floor action, until we gavel out in the evening; set your stop watch, click it on in the morning when the gavel gavels us in, shut it off in the evening when we gavel out, and then keep track of the hours.

If the 100 hours is sacrosanct, if all of the other promises were subordinated to this one, 100-hour promise trumps all, then let's watch that clock closely, because everybody is eager to get to an open process in this Congress.

And I point out also, Mr. Speaker, this first 100 hours has not been an open process. There has not been a legitimate hearing. There has not been a legitimate subcommittee meeting. There hasn't been a legitimate full committee meeting. There hasn't been an amendment accepted. There have been requests to offer amendments. There hasn't been an amendment that has been considered in this Congress. And there has not been a legitimate Rules Committee process that would set the parameters as to what amendments might be considered on this floor, how this debate might move forward.

So the open dialogue and debate, especially my sadness goes out to the freshmen who haven't had a voice in this process. That has all been subordinated to this 100-hour promise, get these things done in the first 100 hours and then give us a little break, Mr. COOPER from Tennessee says. Cut us a little slack on that one. We are going to get around to be an open process. We are going to get around to be a more fair, a more Democratic Congress than we have been.

Well, there is nothing that can be done about it, so I am going to take the gentleman from Tennessee at his word, and many other gentlemen and gentleladies from across the majority party, including the Speaker, at her word. Now, there are some reasons not to take her at her word, but I am going to take her at her word on this 100 hours.

So the clock has now ticked, Mr. Speaker, and I have had the stopwatch on it all along, from gavel in the 110th Congress to gavel out, a real legitimate means of checking the time, and it turns out to be this. Real clock, 100

hours ticked over at 11:44 a.m. today Eastern Standard Time. That was when the 100 hours was up. I would have liked to have heard a bell or whistle or maybe a cannon go off that says now, let's deploy out to our hearings and committee rooms and subcommittee rooms and let's start to consider bills and amendments and let's start having an open debate process and let's start to bring the brains of all of the people that have been elected by the 300 million Americans to bear here so that we can use the resources of the knowledge and the information base from all of our districts to improve legislation. Because if you don't do that, then there is this thing that always shows up in legislation called unintended consequences.

One of the unintended consequences has emerged here easily, and that was the unintended consequence of the political price, at least, that had to be paid for exempting American Samoa from the minimum wage. \$3.26 an hour is something that has been labeled sweatshop labor by many people on the other side of the aisle as they demagogued the issue when they were advocating for an increase in the minimum wage. But when it came time to actually put it into play, there was an exemption for American Samoa.

I happen to have a soft spot in my heart for American Samoa. My father spent some time there 60-some years ago during the Second World War and spoke fondly of American Samoans, the people, their heart, their happy spirit, and I appreciate the gentleman who represents American Samoa here on the floor of Congress. But that was an unintended consequence, I believe, that they had to pay politically, because we didn't have an open committee process.

But the real 100 hours clicked over at 11:44 a.m. Now we are at about 102 hours, as I check this clock, Mr. Speaker. But the odd part of it is that there is real time, and then there is Pelosi time, Mr. Speaker. And her clock has only clicked over to 42 hours as of 11:44 this morning. I don't know if she shut it off or not. I don't know how they are actually keeping hours.

We have been checking with her hours on a regular basis throughout the work here in this 110th Congress to try to understand what their rationale is for when they turn their clock on and when they turn their clock off. And they refuse to give us a single criteria of what that measure might be.

So, Mr. Speaker, I can only conclude that this 100-hour clock was if things got bogged down here, was going to have to be a clock that would run out of time when the six pieces of legislation, H.R. 1 through 5, were passed, if they needed to stretch it that far, and that the rules could be changed along the way and when the clock was clicked on and off. I have tried my best to divine the rationale that only gets you to 42 hours, when we have gavelled in and gavelled out now to about 102 hours.

But I do know this: This is going to be the hardest working Congress in history. That was a point also, Mr. Speaker, and at least a harder working Congress than the 109th. And you are going to measure that by being here more days. We are going to do 5 days instead of 2 or 3 days. Actually, I am thankful, Mr. Speaker, because I wanted to do 5 days here.

□ 1245

I would like to do 5 or 6 days here, and I would like to do it for 2 or 3 weeks in a row, hard and intense. I want Members in this town so that I can network with Members of Congress and that my staff can network with their staff and we can get things done.

I will point out that the individual Members are far more representative of their district if they have access to other Members of Congress and more days to carry on that kind of network and dialogue and debate and deliberation and information sharing than if there is only going to be a gavel in here for 2 days or perhaps for three. No matter how busy we are back in the district Members of Congress are more effective when they have longer periods of time here, and I would submit give us some time, Mr. Speaker, to go back to the district so that we do not lose touch with the soul of the people in our district.

We have got to have the feel of the rhythm. We have got to know what the economy is doing. We have got to know the rhythm of the issues that come up. We have got to have town meetings so that people can stand up and have their voice represented here in Washington.

So I am glad we are here more time, but the way it is calculated out by the Pelosi clock is this hardest working Congress may be hardest one in history, actually has only by the Pelosi clock worked 4.2 hours a day. Now from an administration that ran on a campaign of harder working, these are days that we have gavelled in. This is not any kind of stretch. We were here for 10, 11 days actually pounding this out of actually being in session, Pelosi clock only clicks over 4.2 hours. That is not a lot of time, and there are not too many folks in my district that can work 4.2 hours a day on a 5-day week or a 2-day week or a 7-day week and still feed their family.

So what is the measure going to be? I have said often the people in the district need to measure this by going to the polls.

But what got accomplished in these 100 hours that are, gavel in to gavel out, real clock or the 42 hours of Pelosi time, what got accomplished? Six pieces of legislation. She met that goal within a legitimate clock. Should have just had a legitimate clock. It all would have looked even better, but here is the cost to the country as this points out.

This is my infinity piece, Mr. Speaker, in that we cannot quite measure this cost to the country because it has

gone on too far and it has been too much.

H.R. 1, cost to the taxpayers of about \$6 billion, and this is the cost of some of the changes that were passed that were the 9/11 commission's recommendation, not the promise of all of the changes recommended, but some of the changes recommended, and most of this is the additional cost of examining every piece of freight that comes in from overseas. But it does not include the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission to set up a committee that is going to bring all of our homeland security appropriations process under one set of scrutiny. That was a recommendation, too, of the 9/11 Commission. That one was ignored.

So all of the recommendations? No. That was a promise. The reality was spend more money, \$6 billion, on something that is right now impossible to achieve, and we have set up a system that has done a very good job to inspect these freight-sealed containers in foreign ports before they are loaded on ships so we know what is coming here.

Second item, H.R. 2 was the minimum wage passage. 25.8 million small business owners in America who create three out of every four new jobs are now being told you are going to have to give a \$2.10 raise to all of your employees, and I have been an employer for over 28 years. I have met payroll for over 1,400 consecutive weeks. I have never paid anybody minimum wage, but I met the payroll, and I know this, that we pay on merit. So we have different levels of our wages depending upon the job they do and the level of their efficiency and their proficiency within the job. But my lowest person on the totem level, the one who is entry-level wages, if I give him a \$2.00 an hour raise or a \$2.10 an hour raise, I guarantee you every employee is lined up outside my office wanting their wages to go up \$2 an hour, too, all the way up to the top of the chain, including everybody but the CEO who has to then take it out of whatever your net profits are.

So you make a decision. Do I have as many people? Do I go buy a machine to replace some of these laborers? I am going to be innovative here. I cannot afford to give this raise to everybody because I cannot compete with my competition and sometimes my competition is illegal labor which makes it all the harder because there is not going to be a limitation on wages paid to illegal workers. 25.8 million small businesses punished in that.

Meanwhile, the representative from American Samoa stands over here at this microphone within the last hour and a half and makes the argument that the economy in American Samoa cannot sustain the minimum wage. Now, why is it that Democrats can understand supply and demand and the empirical rule of supply and demand in minimum wage law that if you raise wages it will cost jobs? Why is it they can understand it when they have got

it in a microcosm of American Samoa, about 60,000 people there, but they cannot understand it when it is infused out across an economy of the United States of America that is 300 million people? You take it out of that 300 million people and take it over here and say here is what happens in American Samoa, what is the impact? The impact is 5,000 more jobs lost in American Samoa by some allegations. Could understand that in a microcosm, but not in a broader sense of the overall economy.

That is a scary thing to think about people in charge that do not understand the basic elements of free enterprise and supply and demand and the market system.

H.R. 3 forces taxpayers to pay up to \$135 million to fund research that takes innocent human lives, the embryonic stem cell research mandate. Right now there is no prohibition in America against doing embryonic stem cell research with private dollars or with public dollars of any kind out there. We just were not going to appropriate your Federal tax dollars to do this. So, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is immoral to compel taxpayers to fund scientific operation that ends innocent human life for the sake of someplace down the road 50 years speculating that someone's life would be improved.

There is not a sound basis for this science. This turned into a political argument. It is not a scientific debate. This has already been lost by that side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, long ago, within the last year or two, with more mountains of real scientific evidence building up that cord blood stem cell research, or that also amniotic stem cell research, much of that far more promising. If embryonic stem cell research had merit, it would attract private investment dollars. It is not. That is why they have got to come here. They have turned it into a political argument, not a scientific argument and refuse to debate the science of it. That is the cost of \$135 million to taxpayers that will be spent to take innocent human life.

I have, Mr. Speaker, held those little snowflake babies in my arm. I looked Sam and Ben in the eye and I looked David in the eye here a year ago, giggly, laughing, bubbly little children that were for 9 years frozen, and now they are happy, human lives that are enriching the lives of everyone around them. Parents who could not have children are now parents of real children they nurture and love. These are also adoptable embryos.

Next, H.R. 4, Part D, the prescription drug that commands the Federal Government to negotiate the value of prescription drugs. There is nothing government can do to improve Part D that was passed here a couple or 3 years ago. The cost of that has gone down. It was projected to be \$43 billion a year on average. Now, it is down to \$30 billion a year on average. We would have never passed a Medicare policy without including prescription drugs if we had

anything more than aspirin so awful back in 1965, but because there has been profit in the prescription drug industry, we now have a broad array of innovative new drugs that save thousands and thousands of American lives and improve the American lives. That is because of research and development that has been invested.

This will shut down some of the research and development, and it is a mandate that puts the Federal Government in the business of these negotiations. The Federal Government does a lousy job of that. I mean, look at the price of hammers and toilet seats. You can look for the same kind of thing to be what you get with prescription drugs. Only research and development slows down, gets shut down, and that means the progress in health is diminished.

H.R. 5, cost to taxpayers, \$7.1 billion, and it will not help 84 million Americans with current student loans. \$7.1 billion. But that \$7.1 billion translates into higher tuition rates, Mr. Speaker, higher costs for education. When I have high school students who will say to me in an auditorium what are you going to do to lower my tuition costs, I ask them, what are you doing to shop for the best bang for your tuition dollar? Are you looking at the cost of the richest institution versus the private school versus the community college? Are you paying attention to take some college courses while you are in high school so you can shorten up that window of time to get your 4-year degree? A lot of them will look at me and say, well, I never thought of that; I never thought I had to be the invisible hand of the consumer when I went to college.

It never occurs to them they can have more to say about the cost of tuition increase if they are smart consumers of that education and higher education. So this will raise the price of tuition, and ultimately, it does not help the problem. It makes it worse because everybody will pay more tuition, and some, a few, a small few will get a short break for a narrow window that looks to me like it is about 6 months over a 6-year period of time.

H.R. 6 increases our dependence on Middle Eastern oil and hurts families and seniors with higher energy prices. We finally after years of struggle, Mr. Speaker, last year marginally opened up some of our drilling offshore in the 181 area down off of the Florida panhandle coast. We have 406 trillion cubic feet of natural gas on the outer continental shelf known reserve. That is just the stuff we know, and we have not been able to drill and explore to the fashion we need to.

We have a lot of oil on the outer continental shelf as well. The political barrier to going into that natural resource has been foreboding because there is an environmental political caucus over here that if anything comes up and they say, oh, that is a green issue, their brain shuts off, the

curtains come down over their eyeballs. You cannot talk to them anymore because it is a green issue, and they are going to vote green.

For example, a lot of them believe that ANWR is this pristine, arctic wilderness that somehow or another if we go up there and drill an environmentally friendly well will be destroyed forever and the tourism dollars for the Eskimos would never show up. Well, truthfully, and they know they have to live there, tourism is never going to be their salvation. What if we drilled an environmentally friendly well in ANWR of Alaska and no one came there to see it, then my question is, like when a tree falls in the forest, if no one hears a noise, did it make a sound? Well, if you drill an environmentally friendly well in ANWR and no one looks at it, did it damage the scenery? Not if nobody's looking, Mr. Speaker.

But even if someone is looking, even if thousands are looking, no, it does not damage the scenery. I have challenged the greens on this side of the aisle. We can fly you over the north slope of Alaska today and challenge you to point out the oil fields. I can fly you over them at 4,000 feet, and you can look down there, and unless somebody is giving you a crib sheet, you are never going to know it because these are not derricks sticking up in the sky. These are not pump jacks pumping oil out of the ground, leaking oil and spilling it into the soil, that idea of the old wildcat days you see in the movies from 80 years ago in Texas.

No, these are well casings that have submersible pumps in them. You do not even see their collector pipes that go on off over to their refinery. This is as an environmentally friendly as it gets. We need to open up all of these resources, and instead, this energy initiative that passed here, H.R. 6, cuts down on the amount of energy available to Americans that can do no other, and it changes the deal, Mr. Speaker. It changes the deal.

Where I come from, if you are going to put your capital on the line, a deal has to be a deal. When you look somebody in the eye, whether or not you shake their hand and you say I will do that for X money, that is a deal. We buy cattle out of the window of the pickup on main street of our towns, two or three pot loads of cattle. Yeah, that is fine, I will take these because I trust you. You keep your word; you will bring me what I want.

We should do the same thing out of this Congress, but the system that is set up out there and the conditions by which some of the findings that are off in the gulf coast, and I am thinking of Chevron that has that field, appears to be something that will increase U.S. domestic oil supply by 50 percent, when that finding is opened up, those kind of deals now are no longer a deal with this piece of legislation because it directs a renegotiation of those leases to punish the very people that are pro-

ducing the supply of oil that is driving down the price, that has taken us from \$75 a barrel down to \$53 a barrel. The more that is on the market, the lower the price gets.

Now a deal is not a deal out there in the gulf coast, Mr. Speaker. A deal gets changed, and H.R. 6 says to government, go force, I say this force, renegotiation of those leases because the hook in that is that if you do not renegotiate then you will not be eligible for new leases in areas that might be the most massive oil find in the history of America.

□ 1300

This is debilitating, and the argument was made a little bit ago that they have reduced the dependence on foreign oil. Good night, Mr. Speaker. It couldn't be any more off than 180 degrees by our measure. It has increased our dependency on Middle Eastern oil and it has reduced our availability of oil and gas onto the domestic market, when we can be pumping it out right between us and Hugo Chavez. It is going to slow down that development.

And that is just some of the things on my mind as this 100 hours concludes. I hope the Speaker keeps her promise now and we can come back to work, I think on Monday, and we can gavel in here, and some of these freshmen can have a voice in this process. Not a single freshman has introduced a single amendment. They have not had a bit of impact on one word of all of this legislation that has come through. No freshman has changed one word in anything that has been passed in these first real 100 hours or the 42 hours by the Pelosi clock.

I know there is a lot in the gentleman from New Mexico, and I am very interested in hearing it emerge here on the floor of this Congress, Mr. Speaker. So I would be very pleased to yield so much time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Mexico. And I would point out that we are splitting the time between now and 2:00.

Mr. PEARCE, I would thank the gentleman from Iowa, and consider his comments to the fullest.

I would congratulate my friends across the aisle for their attempts at activity in the first 100 hours. The truth is that, like my friend from Iowa, I am in business. My wife and I had a small business that we bought in, and we had four employees; 14 years later we had 50 employees. We sold that business when we came here. But I understand the creation of jobs and I understand the impact of taxes, the impact of what we do here in Washington. And I like the idea that we would move to bold action. I like the idea that we would compel these United States to be different and new and think differently. But I will tell you, there are some things that in the last 2 weeks have concerned me greatly.

Several years ago I had the opportunity to visit Egypt. When I was in

Egypt, I noticed that almost every building had rebar and unconstructed pieces on top. So I mentioned to a friend of mine who was in the embassy that, why are all the buildings unfinished here? His comment was that they do not tax the buildings until they are complete, and so no one ever finishes their house, their home, the building they live in. The top floor is always under construction. And if they get that floor finished, they continue on and put rebar out onto a new addition that may never actually take place.

The truth is, that is a great example of one of the fundamentals of economics: The things that we tax more of, we have fewer. We tax complete houses, so in Egypt we have fewer full, complete houses. That same principle works here.

Now, yesterday on the floor of the House we heard much language that certainly appeals to many people in this Nation, that we are going to get back at those big greedy oil companies, that we are going to tax the people who have taken advantage of the American consumer. I would just point to the photograph on my right, this is what we are taxing. If the principle holds that we have fewer of what we tax, then we would understand that there are going to be fewer of these monstrous oil rigs. This is about a \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion project that sits out either in the Gulf of Mexico or off of the California coast and they produce tremendous amounts of oil.

I am from an oil producing State, New Mexico, but our oil wells are single wells coming up out of the ground. This one may have 20 or 30 wells that diverge out once it gets under the ocean. Our single wells may produce 50 barrels a day, and that would be a good well in New Mexico. These billion dollar investments might produce thousands or tens of thousands of barrels of oil per day. So like my friend from Iowa said, they contribute greatly to lowering the price of oil and, therefore, lowering the price of gasoline.

Now, in our friends' enthusiasm across the aisle to raise the taxes on those oil companies that have produced so much, what they are actually going to do is raise the taxes on these facilities so that we produce fewer of these and fewer gallons and barrels of oil and gallons of gasoline, which means simply that the price is going to go up at the pump.

Now, I am struck when we are faced with the comments that my friend from Iowa made; I am struck by the comments that he found issues in almost every bill that were like this, that had been poorly thought out yet not subject to the full complement of congressional hearings that they should have gone through, not subject to any amendment. And as I am thinking about his observations, I am drawn to a comment in the Detroit Free Press, and I would submit for the RECORD this entire document. But let me highlight this one quote. This is

Mr. DINGELL speaking, talking about the new greenhouse special committee that is being suggested by the new Speaker. And Mr. DINGELL says, "We should probably name it the Committee on World Travel and Junkets." Mr. DINGELL told the Associated Press, "We are just empowering a bunch of enthusiastic amateurs to go around and make speeches and make commitments that will be very difficult to honor."

[From the Detroit Free Press, Jan. 19, 2007]

DINGELL IS OVERSTEPS ON CLIMATE

(By Justin Hyde)

WASHINGTON.—The battle among House Democrats over global warming heated up Thursday as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced the formation of a special committee to hold hearings on climate change, a job that had been under the watch of U.S. Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich.

Dingell, who has long opposed tougher fuel economy standards because of concerns about their effect on Detroit automakers, will still maintain significant control over any global warming bill through his chairmanship of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. He has already asked former Vice President Al Gore to testify on climate change and told members last week that climate change would be a top priority through a series of hearings to be held soon.

But the special committee reflects concern by Pelosi and other Democrats who want fast action on global warming that Dingell might object to provisions they support. Many House Democrats support setting higher fuel economy targets on vehicles as part of any effort to reduce carbon dioxide emissions linked to a warming of the Earth.

Dingell said he had not seen a detailed list of the committee's responsibilities.

Pelosi's move increases the likelihood that Democrats will propose far tougher constraints on greenhouse gas pollution than the Bush administration wants. She also has outflanked for now—and angered—a few Democrats who head important House committees.

"We should probably name it the committee on world travel and junkets," Dingell told the Associated Press. "We're just empowering a bunch of enthusiastic amateurs to go around and make speeches and make commitments that will be very difficult to honor."

Pelosi announced Thursday that she would form a Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, which would hold hearings and seek suggestions for ways to address climate change. She said Congress needed the committee "to communicate with the American people on this important issue," and that Democrats would come up with bills by July 4.

"The science of global warming and its impact is overwhelming and unequivocal," Pelosi said in a statement. "We already have many of the technology and techniques that we need to reduce global warming pollution, and American ingenuity will supply the rest. With this new select committee, we demonstrate the priority we are giving to confront this most serious challenge."

Pelosi and her aides did not disclose who would head the committee or how many members it would have, but no members of Dingell's Energy and Commerce Committee will apparently be included. While the committee will hold hearings around the country, Pelosi told members Thursday it will not have the ability to write legislation—the key power of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

What concerns Dingell and his allies is that Pelosi is using a select committee rather than a simple task force to highlight climate change. Under House rules, a select committee will have to be created by a House vote, and Pelosi aides say the committee will have Republican members—features that sound more like a legislative body than a Democratic communications tool.

The California Democrat has long backed environmental issues and has asked Dingell and other committee chairmen to submit their ideas for climate change legislation by June 1.

But once the select committee issues its findings, Pelosi could rely on that for legislation or use it instead of what Dingell's committee produces.

Energy issues already appear to be the hottest topic on Capitol Hill. House Democrats celebrated the end of their 100-hour legislative blitz by passing a bill raising about \$15 billion in fees and royalties from oil companies. The revenue is aimed at financing research for alternative fuels and energy conservation.

President George W. Bush's aides have said energy issues will play a key role in Bush's State of the Union address on Tuesday.

White House spokesman Tony Snow told reporters Thursday that the President's speech would address the "needs of security and, at the same time, also the environment."

U.S. Rep. Bart Stupak, a Menominee Democrat and member of Dingell's committee, said the select committee could be useful to "highlight the importance of global warming" and that it won't prevent Energy and Commerce from holding its own hearings.

"However, the legislative writing ability has to remain within the Energy and Commerce Committee," Stupak said. "If suddenly there was a special committee . . . that had legislative writing powers, I'd be very concerned because that's a direct assault on a sitting committee."

Now, when I see our friends who I know don't intend to undermine the economy of this country make decisions like they did yesterday, I am concerned that Mr. DINGELL is very accurate, that we have empowered a bunch of enthusiastic amateurs, that they do not understand the full consequences of their actions.

If we look at the Tunagate scandal where we have now exempted from all of America just one piece of America, SunKist and Del Monte as the parent corporation; every corporation in America, according to the minimum wage law, must, whether they can afford it or not, pay a new higher minimum wage. That is the potential of the majority. And yet they came in, the Speaker gave an exclusion to one company, one company based in her district.

Now, we have heard a lot about the ending of special favors and ending the culture of corruption, and yet one of the first things we do is get a special interest. That does not speak so well for the full intent to follow through in this new beginning that we have been given.

I would also point out that one of the greatest arguments made in the renegotiation, allowing government to negotiate the prices on medical prescription drugs, I would point out that one of the harshest criticisms of this

bill yesterday, the energy bill, H.R. 6, was that government negotiators failed to get it right; that government negotiators failed to put the provisions in. They did not even ask the oil companies to put those provisions into the contracts, and yet it is the same type of negotiator who we are going to turn loose and say that now we are going to get better prices than what the private negotiators have. I simply don't believe it. I voted the other way. But we will see if our enthusiastic amateurs have gotten it right, or if we in fact do not increase revenues to the Treasury and in fact begin to limit access to prescription medications, which is what I have been told.

For an example, we can go and look at the Veterans Prescription Drug List, and we see that I think the number is only 30 percent of the drugs that have been introduced in the last 5 to 10 years are actually on the list for veterans. They don't have the same access that people on the Medicare prescription drug program do. So that would be a terrible shame if, in their enthusiasm to create a better plan, our friends have instead created a worse plan. I am certainly willing to work with them and see, but in the meantime I do worry.

Now, there is a piece of the legislation yesterday that we all must read. If you have access to your computers, you can always look up H.R. 6, and go to page 10. That is section 2, title II, and we are under the section 204 and we actually then begin a long series of pages and we come to page 10 under section 204, item C. And I will read this, because you as colleagues will find this stunning that it is actually in print. That transfers item C, line 4, page 10: A lessee shall not be eligible to obtain any economic benefit of any covered lease or any other lease.

So President Clinton's team had negotiated bad leases, and now our friends are saying that those bad leases must be stopped. We simply need to stop them. We don't need to unravel them. We don't need to go through the thorny process of making it right for both sides as we unravel. We simply are going to punish you by not allowing you to derive any economic benefit from this type of installation. I will tell you, that undermines the full faith and credit of the United States. If we cannot depend on the word of the United States, then what do we have? I would draw parallels to things that other countries have done.

In Venezuela, Hugo Chavez in 2001 raised the royalty rates from 1 percent to 16 percent just like that. Now, I will tell you as a business guy, if you know that a cost is going to be 1 percent or 16 percent, it is sort of irrelevant, but you must know that the cost is steady. When he raised those rates just at a single point with no ability to redesign these types of infrastructures, then he severely limited the interest of people to invest in that country, and certainly

that is exactly what is happening. Foreign firms are already curtailing their investments in that country.

So in Venezuela we see that there is an attempt to change existing contracts, very similar to the way that we changed yesterday on the floor of this House of Representatives, and it has affected the desire of people to invest in Venezuela.

In Bolivia we have the same thing. The Bolivian government threatened to expel oil companies from that country in 2006 if they did not agree to new government terms on existing contracts. What has happened? I think you could forecast what has happened. What is done is that foreign investors are now beginning to reconsider whether or not they will actually be a part of the Bolivian economy or not. This is the thing that all shareholders, they will live with any certainty in life, but they will not live with uncertainty. And when we begin to change the contracts, they begin to pull their investments out and go to places where certainty is more of a potential.

In Russia we have seen the same thing. Companies such as Shell, Exxon, BP have had valid oil and gas leases in Russia for years. President Putin had a number of government agencies threaten to pull these leases for a number of suspect reasons. By threatening to pull these leases, Shell was forced to give up assets that were worth billions of dollars. So we see in Russia this attempt to maneuver contracts, to manipulate contracts much as what we did yesterday, and the effects are very bad. Long term, Russia will not have people who are willing to come and invest in that country.

In 2001, I had the opportunity to go as a company; my wife and I had a small company that dealt in oil and gas, repairs of oil wells. Russia was looking for such capability. So in 2001, I went with a team of people who did various different projects. We were the ones who did down hole repairs on oil wells. They took me, they showed me files of maybe 6,000 or 8,000 wells that were simple to correct, yet they in their technology in 2001 did not have access to even the basics that my father had seen here in the United States in the early 1950s when he was working in the same industry. My father retired from Exxon; his whole life was work.

So when I went back, I showed him the videos of the equipment that was in Russia in 2001. He said, "Son, in 1950 we were more advanced than what we are seeing here."

When countries are unwilling to allow people to have stable returns, it doesn't have to be high returns, low returns, but there must be stability and there must be predictability. When countries do not allow that, there will be no investments. And so here Russia was with over 6,000 wells asking me in 2001 to come and fix because they did not have anyone that was capable of fixing them.

I determined that the environment was very, very unsettling in Russia, so

we actually opted not to become a part of the team that went there. There was a company that was about 10 times our size located in Abilene, Texas. They did go. That was about maybe a \$50 million company, maybe a \$100 million company. Within 2 years, they were selling everything at bankruptcy because the Russians, as you can predict, said, "No. These assets are going to belong to us."

So this contracting problem that was attempted to be cured yesterday in legislation I think is going to be, instead of a fix, is going to cause prices to be higher at the pump, investments to be less, and at the end of the day we are going to wonder if maybe we did not empower a bunch of enthusiastic amateurs to go around and make commitments on behalf of the Federal Government. We shall see. I wish my friends well.

I would say that I am not the only one who wonder about the contracts. Just day before yesterday the Washington Post had an editorial which declared that these elements that are included in the bill, the ones that begin to undo the contracts that we voted on yesterday and pushed by the majority in this House, the Washington Post declared those solutions to be ones that Russia and Bolivia would be proud of.

Now, that is not exactly the new direction that the American people were promised as we came into this session. So I would encourage my colleagues to please open the process up. With debate in committee, these shortcomings in bills could have been brought out. The rough edges could have been knocked off the bills. Instead, we have been faced with bills that have no amendments allowed, no debate in committees, no consideration in committees. And so I worry that our friends are circumventing democracy.

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Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from New Mexico for bringing his expertise to the floor. I listened with fascination to the Russian narrative. That is one I wasn't aware of. I look forward to looking into that in further detail in the future.

I see we have some freshmen who have come to the floor, apparently poised to proceed with a Special Order over the next 60 minutes. I trust this is in a great celebration of the first 100 hours and the accomplishment of the 100 hours now being in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and you are here to celebrate you are finally going to have a voice in this process. Maybe next week one of you can offer an amendment and go to a subcommittee meeting and go to a hearing or do a markup, and you can get into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD some of the things you promised your voters you were going to do.

I have to believe you didn't think you would be muzzled for the first 100 hours, and you thought there would be a process for you to be allowed to offer

amendments, engage in debate, go to subcommittee and committee meetings, and maybe even go before the Rules Committee and make a request and have it granted that you could bring your pet issue to this floor of Congress and actually accomplish the things that you pledged you would do.

If any of you have had any of that voice up to this point, I think it would be interesting to hear that. I suspect, no, you are full of frustration, quietly, and now we are going to hear your voices, full throated, maybe in the next hour, hopefully next week. Pelosi time only says 42 hours. I am not sure if you are going to give that chance.

Please make that request so we can go to real-time. Congratulations, you got it all done in the first real 100 hours. You didn't need Pelosi time. I want to hear your voice in the amendment process. Welcome to Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this great honor to speak to you this afternoon. I also thank the gentleman from New Mexico.

FRESHMEN DEMOCRATS CELEBRATE COMPLETING 100-HOUR AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) is recognized for 42 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here in the House of Representatives. It is an honor and privilege to rise to represent my State of New Hampshire, and also as a new Member of the Democratic majority to celebrate the 100-hours agenda that has recently been completed.

I note with interest that the gentleman from Iowa suggests that somehow the new Democratic Members have not had great input into the agenda for America that the 100 hours was meant to advance and did advance, and somehow the suggestion might be that we haven't participated fully with our leadership in the Congress in determining the new course and a new direction for this country.

I would correct that gentleman because the new Democratic majority and the new Members that are here have had great input with the leadership because the American people have sent us here with a mandate for change. As we campaigned this fall all across this country, nothing was clearer from the American people than they wanted change. They wanted change in the way government did its business. They wanted change in the direction of this country, and we are now privileged and honored to be part of history and be here on the floor of the people's House to help make that change happen. Today, in some sense, we come to celebrate the 100-hours agenda.

My colleagues across the aisle have made much over the past 2 weeks about