

Hudson County is doing in my district. They are, in part, responsible for a Bayonne facility for homeless men, a program for the elderly in Jersey City, a training program for 59 shelter residents, housing for Hudson County individuals with HIV/AIDS, meals, soup kitchens, and educational services for homeless persons.

In 2005 the United Way of Hudson County created an emergency shelter system for the homeless that was widely honored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the State of New Jersey, and the State Association of Community Development Directors.

In 2006 they were awarded the County's first "Housing First" grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This grant provided housing for social services for 26 disabled individuals. Their Housing First focus, championed by the United Way and the County Executive, Tom DeGise, will provide housing and hope for a better future for the homeless of Hudson County.

Please join me on July 30 for the second congressional reception honoring the United Way.

TRIBUTE TO THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate an organization that has contributed to our community in my district in Michigan for something like 40 years, and has inspired us in many ways.

The Special Olympics is a beacon of opportunity and support for people with intellectual disabilities, providing training and athletic competition in over 100 countries.

Michigan's 9th district, my district, is no exception. We have been blessed with a dedicated and vigilant local organization there that has established a successful program with amazing results.

More than 400 athletes participated in this year's Oakland County Spring Games this past May, including Charles Howard from Farmington and Jaime Bonneau from Clarkston, who have been selected to compete in the World Games in 2009. I extend my best wishes to their respective competitions.

On the 40th anniversary of this extraordinary organization, I wish to honor them for their efforts and their contributions to our community and the communities around the Nation.

POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I speak on behalf of immigrants. Sometimes he-

roes come from the least expected places. Such is the case of Edwin Ramirez from Pacoima, California. Ramirez, despite his obstacles, successfully built small businesses with his brother.

In 1990, as a parent and a leader with a vision, he quickly rose as a leader in his local PTA and within Los Angeles Unified School District. Ramirez also founded and became president of the Pacoima Neighborhood Council to voice concerns of his community.

Edwin Ramirez is an example of the American dream and a hero in the community. Edwin is an immigrant. It is because of Edwin Ramirez and other role models like him that our country has always welcomed immigrants.

For those reasons, on behalf of the American dream, I urge my colleagues to support comprehensive immigration on behalf of the 12 million to 14 million people here in the United States.

COMMONSENSE SOLUTION

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it is a basic rule of economics that when demand goes up, but supply remains stagnant, prices go up. That is the primary cause of the recent rise in gas prices.

Energy costs affect our transportation costs, our food costs and our national security. If there were a silver bullet, an alternative energy source that could replace oil tomorrow, we would all be for it. But there isn't. So while we are working with oil, it makes economic and national security sense to reduce our dependence on foreign imports.

If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to invest in alternative energy, good. So do we. If they want to promote conservation, good. So do we. But if they continue to stand in the way of opening up new areas right here at home for oil and natural gas exploration, then they will stand alone.

House Republicans are ready to act because Americans want an all-of-the-above energy policy. When will House Democrats stand with the American people, rather than in their way?

In conclusion, God bless our troops. We will never forget September the 11th.

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ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, in Washington this week, there are thousands and thousands of African American women who are members of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. That was the first Greek letter African American sorority in this country. It's been a sorority that's been intertwined with all

of the activities of this society. In the last 100 years through women's suffrage and the civil right's movement, there have been active members.

Service and scholarship are the bywords of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. Their members have included Coretta Scott King and Rosa Parks, and honorary members have included Eleanor Roosevelt, and announced yesterday, Michelle Obama.

The Alpha Kappa Alpha women are doing good works in this country, and I appreciate their including me. I will be joining them at a luncheon today. And I congratulate them on 100 years of service started at Howard University here in Washington, D.C.

CONGRESS MUST LIFT THE MORATORIUM ON DRILLING

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

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the energy crisis gripping our country. The time has come for America to unite behind an aggressive campaign to reduce our dependence on foreign energy. Failure to act now will only drive up energy prices and destroy good-paying jobs.

Solving this crisis requires producing more American energy. We must lift the moratorium imposed by Congress on offshore drilling. Also, we must remove the roadblocks preventing leasing programs for oil shale on public lands. Finally, we must allow responsible drilling in ANWR. Doing these things will have an immediate impact on gasoline prices.

President Bush this week lifted the executive moratorium on new oil and gas exploration on the Outer Continental Shelf. This is an important first step but must be followed by action from Congress to finish the job. Billions of barrels of oil and trillions of cubic feet of natural gas are available to America if we do this. We are the only country in the world not using the energy at its disposal.

Congress must act immediately to help lower gasoline prices for all Americans.

REPUBLICANS' ENERGY SOLUTION IS WORKING FOR BIG OIL BUT NOT FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, when the President took office, gasoline cost less than \$1.50 a gallon, and a barrel of oil was selling for \$30. So they had a planning meeting down at the White House, and gas has jumped to \$4.50 a gallon and oil is nearly \$150 a barrel.

Despite these facts, the President would like the American people to believe that he has proposed a credible

new plan to lower energy prices, but consider this: The President's invasion of Iraq and tacit military threats to Iran have destabilized the Middle East and driven oil prices out of control.

Big Oil has leases, access, and decades to drill on millions of acres on the Continental Shelf, but they choose instead to drill down into the wallets of the American people. Oil companies are already exploring today. They're exploring the upper limits of their stock prices by using their billions in profits to buy back stock, not to reinvest in America.

We still don't know what the Vice President's secret meeting with the industry was when gas prices were \$1.50 a gallon, but it sure looks like it's working for the oil companies, but it isn't working for us.

We've got a plan, and we will propose it and bring it out here on the floor.

THE FUTURE OF AMERICA IS AT STAKE

(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. Mr. Speaker, to help families dealing with the high price of gas, the White House ended the ban on deep ocean energy exploration. Now it's up to the Congress to give this commonsense move the final green light.

We must pursue increasing production of American-made energy in an environmentally conscious manner off the coast of the Atlantic, the Gulf, and the Pacific. We have the technology to access fuels right here in America while still protecting our natural resources for future generations.

We should and must develop our own oil and natural gas resources in the deep waters offshore, on Federal lands, and in oil shale if we want to revive America's independence. It's past time Congress got off the dime and approved deep ocean energy exploration today.

Americans, the future of America is at stake.

MOVING TOWARDS A NEW DIRECTION

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, the American economy has lost nearly half a million jobs this year with six consecutive months of negative job growth. In fact, under this administration our economy has the slowest record of job growth since the Hoover administration, has added \$3.5 trillion dollars to the national debt and seen the value of the dollar plummet. Gasoline is \$4.10 a gallon, the stock market has flatlined, the financial industry is in crisis, and the housing industry teeters on the brink.

We simply cannot afford to continue the same failed policies of the past 8

years. And while Senator MCCAIN's chief economist says that it's all in our heads, that the Americans are just whining about the economy, Democrats recognize the problem and are working to provide some relief. And though we lack cooperation from a President who doesn't share our values, we have shown leadership by overriding his vetoes four times now and counting.

Democrats in Congress are leading the way and moving towards a new direction for our economy.

ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke at a rally highlighting how America's energy crisis is impacting the working men and women in our Nation. The average working person in my district works at a hotel or a restaurant meeting the needs of the tourism industry.

That average person also drives to work. There is no light rail or subways taking them from rural homes to their place of work near the coast. The folks they serve probably drove hundreds of miles with their families for a well-deserved vacation, but few families are coming to the beach this year because of high gasoline prices. It also means that few folks will be working at the hotels and restaurants.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrat-led House's lack of action on energy policy is affecting every segment of our society, so much so that I am receiving drill bits in the mail demanding that we take action to lower energy prices in America. Those drill bits aren't coming as part of some well-financed campaign; they're coming because we can no longer hope that the problem will go away.

Like many other countries, the United States is blessed with many types of natural resources. I agree with the vast majority of Americans by viewing our natural resources as one of our greatest assets, not as an environmental liability.

We must take action now and vote on legislation immediately that would allow for more domestic energy to be produced by Americans for Americans.

LIHEAP

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

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, to significantly lower gas prices at the pump, Congress must end rampant speculation in crude oil futures, yet our Republican colleagues in both branches have consistently opposed such legislation. Meanwhile, a whole new crisis looms as families face a price approaching \$5 per gallon for heating oil for their homes. That's twice last winter's price.

Last winter in Massachusetts and New England alone, 350,000 low-income families used the LIHEAP program to get by, yet only one in four of the families eligible by income use the program. Many of those already eligible families will be in desperate need of help this winter, and many more middle-income families' budgets will be severely stressed by the doubled price of home heating oil.

Heat for a home or an apartment is not optional for any family, and Congress must act on an historic investment in LIHEAP before we finish our session.

DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE ON IRAN IS WORKING

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, no one wants war with Iran, but America and our allies in Europe have been exerting increased diplomatic and economic pressure to move the nation of Iran and its government away from developing a nuclear program.

In May, Congressman GARY ACKERMAN and I introduced bipartisan legislation, H. Con. Res. 362, urging this administration to impose expanded economic sanctions on key sectors of the Iranian economy. It appears as though it's having its good effect. In what's being reported today as what will be the "closest contact between the two countries since the Iranian revolution of 1979," this weekend, U.S. Ambassador William Burns will meet with top arms negotiators from Tehran. It will be more of a listening session and should not be overstated.

However, I would offer that this glimmer of hope in these negotiations is precisely because of the resolve of the United States and the European community to economically and diplomatically isolate Iran over its nuclear ambitions. But now is not the time for us to shrink from renewed diplomatic pressure.

I urge all of my colleagues to join Congressman GARY ACKERMAN and me and cosponsor H. Con. Res. 362 before this weekend. Let's send a deafening message to the negotiators in Iran that the American people stand for diplomatic and economic isolation until they abandon their nuclear ambition.

THE ANSWER TO OUR OIL PROBLEM: PRODUCE, PUNISH, AND PROMOTE

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Good morning. My friends on the Republican side of the aisle are complaining about gas prices, but with two oil men in the White House, is it any wonder that the price per barrel has gone from \$30 at the beginning of the Bush administration to \$150 or thereabouts.