

The old adage goes that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Apart from creating the Strategic Petroleum Reserves after the oil embargoes of the 1970s, the United States did painfully little to make sure that oil could never again be used as a weapon against us. If anything, we put ourselves further under the thumb of foreign oil. In 1972, we imported approximately 28 percent of the oil we consume from foreign countries; today the United States imports 62 percent of its oil from other nations. While half of that amount comes from our friends in Mexico and Canada, the other half of our imported oil travels from unstable, undemocratic or unfriendly regimes. That means that every time I fill up my gas tank—whether the price is \$2 a gallon or \$4 a gallon—at least half of my money goes into the economies of Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Nigeria, and Angola. And while the tactics of oil manipulation may change—price spikes versus an outright embargo—the results are eerily the same.

That is why I am introducing this bill, to continue to move our country forward on the path toward breaking America's dependence on foreign sources of oil while at the same time investing in a renewable energy future. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are looking to pass a costly cap-and-trade program that will only serve to increase the price of energy for the American consumer and devastate energy companies in my home State of Indiana. Now is not the time to burden families with higher energy costs, when many of them are already struggling to find and keep jobs, pay for college and provide for their families.

I believe that in the long-run we need to get off oil and that requires more investment in alternative energy and energy conservation technologies. My bill addressed this through provisions that would increase alternative energy sources and diversify the energy grid with currently available alternative energy technologies. As a nation, we waste far too much energy with inefficient engines and machines. That is why my bill would provide tax incentives for companies to produce fuel efficient vehicles. In fact, it provides a \$500 tax credit for individuals who purchase hybrid cars made by American-based companies.

However, while we are discovering new, clean and cost-effective ways to increase the American energy supply, we must recognize that oil will remain a part of our energy mix for some time. The good news about this is that we have plenty of it. The Department of the Interior, DOI, conducted a comprehensive inventory of oil and natural gas resources located off our coastlines within the last several years, and according to the Department's figures there is an estimated 8.5 billion barrels of known oil reserves and 29.3 trillion cubic feet, tcf, of known natural gas reserves along our coastlines; with 82 percent of the oil and 95 percent of the gas located in the Gulf of Mexico, GOM. However, even more importantly, the Department of the Interior estimates that there are untapped resources of about 86 billion barrels, 51 percent in the Gulf of Mexico, and 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, 55 percent in the Gulf of Mexico, out there. My bill would open up these areas to access these resources. Domestic production of these resources would provide much-needed real energy jobs without any cost to the taxpayer.

In addition, my bill opens up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, ANWR, which holds the

single largest deposit of oil in the entire United States. Its 10.4 billion barrels of oil is more than double the proven reserves of the entire State of Texas and almost half of the total proven reserves in the U.S., 22 billion barrels. Had President Clinton not vetoed ANWR energy production in 1995, the United States could be getting nearly 1.5 million barrels of oil per day from the arctic right now.

In addition, the U.S. has been called the Saudi Arabia of oil shale. It has been estimated that oil shale deposits in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming hold the equivalent of as little as 1.8 trillion barrels of oil and potentially as much as 8 trillion barrels of oil. In comparison, Saudi Arabia reportedly holds proved reserves of 267 billion barrels. Unfortunately, oil-shale is rough equivalent to diesel fuel and a number of Clean Air Act regulations—such as low-sulfur diesel—and federal motor fuel taxes—which favor gasoline over diesel fuels—have created a strong financial disincentive regarding the production and use of oil-shale fuels. Many of these deposits are on public land making it more bureaucratically complicated to exploit this resource. My bill would provide a financial incentive for companies to invest in and produce more oil from oil shale.

Getting more domestic oil on the market is only half the solution. We haven't built a new refinery in this country in more than 25 years because the approval process for new refinery construction is estimated to require up to 800 different permits. While existing refineries have undergone significant expansion over the years, even as others have been shuttered, our aging refinery infrastructure leaves little margin for error. If we begin to produce more domestic crude oil we would need to turn it into home heating oil, gasoline, or diesel through the refining process. The ability to refine oil must keep pace with the demand for gasoline and diesel. My bill would create an expedited process for the construction of new refining capacity by streamlining the permitting process and opening up closed military bases for construction.

Clearly, developing new oil fields and refineries will take some time. In the interim my bill also helped promote the production of non-food sources for biofuels. It also opens up Federal land for the production of biofuel crops in order to provide relief from high food prices that have resulted from ethanol production.

Madam Speaker, I believe in conservation, I believe in energy efficiency, and I believe in diversifying our energy supply by using wind, solar, coal-to-liquid technologies, ethanol and other renewable energy sources. But the fact of the matter is that oil and natural gas are still going to be a part of our energy mix for a long time to come and we must be able to access our own resources rather than becoming more dependent on unstable parts of the world.

I would like to urge my colleagues to join me in co-sponsoring this important legislation to help America get on the road towards energy independence and to create real jobs at no cost to the taxpayer.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CINCO DE MAYO

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2009

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Cinco de Mayo, a day that represents freedom, liberty and determination for the people of Mexico and Mexican Americans.

H. Res. 230, a resolution introduced by my friend Congressman JOE BACA, recognizes the historical significance of the Mexican holiday of Cinco de Mayo, a day on which we celebrate the Mexican army's unlikely victory over French forces at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. While the Mexicans were outnumbered, they defeated a well-equipped French Army that had been undefeated for almost 50 years. The holiday of Cinco de Mayo is mainly a regional celebration in Mexico, while for Mexican Americans it represents heritage and pride.

Hispanics are the fastest growing minority community in our Nation. In 2007, the Hispanic population in the United States reached over 45 million, 13.2 million of whom live in California, and it continues to rise. Hispanics now own a record number of small businesses, creating millions of jobs across our country.

This Cinco de Mayo, let us thank the members of our Latino community for their important contributions to American culture and society. Please join me in celebrating Cinco de Mayo and appreciating the values, traditions, and contributions of Mexican Americans.

IN COMMEMORATION OF CINCO DE MAYO

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I would like to commemorate Cinco de Mayo, or the Fifth of May, in honor of the historic day that Mexico defeated France at the Battle of Puebla in 1862. Cinco de Mayo is a national holiday that symbolizes courage, honor, liberty, unity and the struggle for freedom for millions of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans.

Cinco de Mayo has a deep history that all Americans should recognize and remember. Shortly after Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1810, internal political takeovers and wars destroyed the Mexican economy causing Mexico to borrow money from France and other creditors. Mexico was unable to pay back the debt they owed to France; thus, the French invaded Mexico in an attempt to force repayment. The Mexican troops were outnumbered by the French—the French army had 6,500 soldiers while the Mexican army only had 4,500 soldiers. The odds were stacked against the Mexican soldiers: they were outnumbered, untrained and ill-equipped, fighting against an army deemed as one of the best trained and equipped in the world. The French soldiers were confident that their attacks against Mexico would leave the struggling nation on its knees, bowing to a European crown once again. Much to their dismay,