

*This Week in Washington*



WITH CONGRESSMAN  
JO BONNER

### House Democrats Adjourn Instead of Voting on Energy Bill

On August 4, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi adjourned the House of Representatives for five weeks without allowing the House to vote on a bipartisan, comprehensive energy plan.

Incredibly, House leadership turned off the cameras and microphones on the House floor to prevent the American people across the country from hearing Republicans criticize the majority party's inaction on energy.

However, this stunt did not stop House Republicans from voicing their opposition to the lack of energy votes allowed this Congress.

Many Americans who traveled to visit Washington, D.C. to tour our nation's Capitol had the opportunity to witness history as several Members took to the floor in opposition to the House

adjourning for five weeks without taking any action to address energy prices.

Since the House adjourned on August 4, hundreds of visitors have gone to the visitor's gallery of the darkened House chamber to listen to Members – without microphones – discuss real solutions to deal with our nation's energy crisis.

Newspapers around the country have applauded the efforts of Republicans for demanding congressional action.

The Washington Times editorialized last week that "Congress has passed energy legislation in some form or another every year over the past eight years" House Speaker Nancy Pelosi couldn't be bothered with high gas prices' effect on working men and women in and around her California district."

In fact, Speaker Pelosi was recently asked why she refuses to allow a vote on domestic drilling, and her response was, "I'm trying to save the planet."

Focusing on environmental issues appears to be more important than trying to foster energy independence in order to bring some relief at the fuel pump.

Republicans have made repeated attempts throughout this Congress – both in committees and on the House floor – to force an up or down vote on making our country less dependent on foreign oil, but these attempts have been repeatedly blocked.

On April 24, 2006, then-Minority Leader Pelosi said, “Democrats have a common sense plan to help bring down skyrocketing prices.”

Yet, after 20 months in the majority, gasoline prices have risen by more than \$1.53 per gallon and, incredibly, the new majority has called for an additional 50-cent tax on every gallon of gasoline and voted at least four separate times to increase energy taxes this Congress alone.

In addition, the majority refuses to allow an up-or-down vote on the bipartisan, American Energy Act. The American Energy Act, H.R. 6566, is an “all-of-the above” energy plan that will increase the supply of American-made energy, improve conservation and efficiency, and promote renewable and alternate energy.

Americans have watched energy prices skyrocket this year, and they expect Congress to take action to lower gas prices and increase American energy production.

Democrats and Republicans have an obligation to put their partisan differences aside and work together on legislation that will make America truly independent of foreign oil.

#### Tanker Re-bid Moves Forward

As part of the expedited re-competition of the Air Force's tanker contract announced by Defense Secretary Robert Gates last month, the Pentagon released a draft request for proposal (RFP) last week.

This draft RFP is a collection of amendments and clarifications to the original RFP issued last year. Its purpose is to address the concerns raised by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) in June.

As Secretary Gates laid out last month, the final RFP will be released mid-August with the revised proposals due by the first of October.

By releasing the draft RFP a few days ahead of his announced schedule, Secretary Gates once again underscored the importance of this procurement and the importance of building tankers.

I am hopeful that this draft RFP, while addressing the concerns of the GAO, will maintain a level playing field for both competitors, and I look forward to seeing the Northrop Grumman tanker reaffirmed as the more modern, more capable aircraft.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.

--30--

*For release the week of Monday, August 11, 2008. For more information please contact Mike Lewis at (202)225-4931.*