

removed from “tree plantations” or biomass that is considered slash or brush can be used to meet the renewable fuel standard. It would also exclude any biomass taken from old growth forests, forests in the later stages of development, or forests that are considered “ecological communities” as defined by State Natural Heritage Programs.

With these restrictions, this Renewable Fuels Standard discourages efforts to reduce wildfire risk, control insects and disease in forests, improve forest health and wildlife habitat, and create market opportunities for family forest owners. There is also a tremendous opportunity to utilize existing forest products industry infrastructure to produce renewable fuels. H.R. 6 would do little to encourage that development.

A renewable fuels producer would likely look at all these restrictions on forest biomass and decide not to bother with forestry materials. If we are to come anywhere close to meeting the RFS mandates in H.R. 6, we must have a substantial amount of forest biomass as a feedstock. I'm deeply concerned that we will not be able to meet these mandates with the restrictions in H.R. 6 on the use of forest biomass.

This energy policy, set in place by the Democrat majority, exemplifies the Democrat motto through and through: tax and spend. This bill imposes \$21 billion in tax increases. The other side will tell you that these tax increases will not affect the average hardworking American, only the “big, evil oil companies.” Nothing could be farther from the truth. The taxes contained in this bill will impede new domestic oil and gas production, will discourage investment in new refinery capacity, and will make it more expensive for domestic energy companies to operate in the U.S. than their foreign competitors, making the price at the pump rise even higher.

Let's make no mistake: an increased tax doesn't just hurt energy companies, it hurts every American—individual, farm, or company—that consumes energy. Increased taxes on energy companies are passed to consumers. Every American will see these increased costs on their energy bill. This body shouldn't pass legislation that further raises energy prices for consumers.

What is even more disturbing is that these increased costs will be felt by some of our Nation's most poor. On average, the Nation's working poor spends approximately 13 to 30 percent of their yearly income on energy costs. This average is already too high, and sadly this legislation will only dramatically increase the amount of money these workers will have to spend on energy costs. I have heard those on the other side of the aisle say that we must all shoulder the cost to produce clean energy. Well, the costs of the clean energy in the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) alone, as estimated by just one of Virginia's many electric utilities, will increase \$200 million for its retail customers. By shifting to renewable energy sources, that are not as available or as cost effective as traditional sources, we will see a rise in energy prices across the board and this will be hardest felt by working people who cannot afford to shoulder any more costs.

While this bill is said to be focused on new energy technologies, it fails to address some of our most promising domestic alternative and renewable energy supplies that could be

cost effective for American consumers. Coal is one of our Nation's most abundant resources, yet the development of coal-to-liquid technologies is ignored in this bill. Furthermore, this legislation does nothing to encourage the construction of new nuclear facilities.

Proponents of this legislation will tout how green this bill is; however, if my colleagues really want to promote green energy they should encourage the production of more nuclear sites, which provide CO<sub>2</sub> emission-free energy. The rest of the world is far outpacing the U.S. in its commitment to clean nuclear energy. We generate only 20 percent of our energy from this clean energy, when other countries can generate about 80 percent of their electricity needs through nuclear. It is a travesty that in over 1,000 pages this legislation does not once mention or encourage the construction of clean and reliable nuclear plants. Nuclear energy is the most reliable and advanced of any renewable energy technology, and if we are serious about encouraging CO<sub>2</sub>-free energy use, we must support nuclear energy.

This legislation does nothing to address the energy concerns of our country; and it does nothing to relieve agricultural producers of their increasing input costs. This legislation only makes the situation worse and it is the product of a flawed process that does not have bipartisan support.

This bill is a dangerous policy for our country. If we really want to make our country energy independent, this Congress must pass an energy bill that contains energy. This bill does not. I urge my colleagues to reject this awful bill, let's start over, and work to find real solutions to the energy needs of our Nation.

#### ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 18, 2007*

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Energy Independence and Security Act—a major step towards securing a new, clean energy policy for America.

Last November the American people told Congress that they wanted a new direction in our Nation's energy policy. Today we have the opportunity to vote for a bill that the overwhelming majority of our constituents agree is the most significant Federal energy legislation in nearly 30 years—a bill that helps our country deal with the current energy crisis, prepare for the energy realities of the future, and address the impending climate crisis.

The Energy Independence and Security Act contains an increase in fuel economy standards for cars and trucks. Raising CAFE standards will also reduce America's dependence on foreign oil by 1.1 million gallons per day, cut emissions almost 27 million tons per year, and save Minnesota families up to \$1000 every year.

The Energy Independence and Security Act sets landmark energy efficiency standards for appliances, lighting, and buildings. As a result, American consumers and companies will save billions of dollars in unnecessary energy costs, while decreasing their burden on the planet.

And the Energy Independence and Security Act makes a commitment to the fuels of the future, by replacing Middle East crude with Midwest crops.

By supporting this legislation we can make the first big step towards a more secure and more environmentally sustainable America. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation, and to continue working to overcome the obstructionism of the President for additional, needed reforms for our country and our planet.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. KATHY CASTOR**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 19, 2007*

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 1173, during consideration of H. Con. Res. 254, recognizing and celebrating the centennial of Oklahoma statehood I incorrectly voted “nay”, when I intended to vote “Yea”.

#### SCAPPOOSE-VERNONIA SCHOOL

**HON. DAVID WU**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 19, 2007*

Mr. WU. Madam Speaker, as my colleagues know, in early December, the Pacific Northwest coast experienced severe storms. The storms caused devastating damage that isolated towns, left citizens without housing, transportation, communications, water, heat or electricity, and tragically caused loss of life. One city in my district, Vernonia, was particularly hard hit. The elementary, middle and high school were all severely damaged. Because of the damage, Vernonia students in grades 6–12 are now going to school in the nearby community of Scappoose. Although the storm recovery continues, and will continue for some time, I wanted to share with my colleagues the following communication from Scappoose High School Principal Sue Hays reporting on the first day of Scappoose-Vernonia school. Her message is one of communities coming together, neighbors and families helping each other. Simply put, Oregonians at their best.

I will continue to do all I can to assist Oregon communities and families recover from the storms, but I wanted my colleagues in the House to know that the compassionate, proud, and hardy Oregon spirit shines on. Here is Principal Hays' message:

“Dear Scappoose Families,

I wanted to let you know how our first day of Scappoose-Vernonia School was. It was a great day, a very emotional day as the Vernonia students arrived in seven buses. Their teachers greeted them at the cafeteria doors with open arms. Every comment from the Vernonia staff to students was so heart felt. Questions about how is your family? How is your house? Are you ok? And . . . “we are so glad you are here . . . we have missed you” was repeated with each child. Many hugs took place as if these students had not seen each other for a lifetime! It was a very emotional moment for some of us.

We managed to feed all 300 students that showed up in record time, and then the