

me to bring this real and workable bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, the voters have demanded an end to President Bush's occupation of Iraq. They don't want more talk, they want a real plan. They want a plan that will bring our troops home. This is our mandate, and this is the oath we swore to yesterday.

HONORING ANATOLE MILUNAS

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, it is great to be back in session and back in Washington. I look forward to a very interesting new Congress.

One of the great benefits of being a Member is the opportunity to talk about our national treasure, which is our citizens. We just lost one who became a good friend of mine, doesn't live in my Congressional district, is from the state of Illinois, name of Tony Milunas.

Now, Tony, is the story of a lot of post World War II era emigres who came from the former captive nations, the former Eastern Bloc countries that immigrated here, became active citizens, not only supported this great country, served in the military, but also was very involved in the 50 years of totalitarian ruling of the Eastern Bloc countries and helped bring freedom to those countries. With that I am going to give a little background on Tony and mention how he was very important in my life.

Anatole Milunas, "Tony," as we knew him, was born August 3, 1936 in the City of Sauliai, Lithuania. During World War II, he left Lithuania to escape the second Soviet occupation and the subsequent 50 years of terror. While in exile in 1946, he finished high school and began studying for a degree in technology in Darmstadt, Germany.

After he immigrated to the United States, he continued his schooling and graduated with a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois. During the Korean War, he served in the United States Army, stationed in Germany as a translator and adviser to a staff officer.

He actively participated in the presidential election of President Ronald Reagan and President George Herbert Walker Bush, and has been a strong supporter of the Illinois Republican Party. From 1979 to 1985, he was a chairman of the Lithuanian American Republican National Federation, and from 1994 to 2006, Mr. Milunas was the chairman of the Lithuanian American Republican League in Illinois.

He died December 23, 2006. He left a widow, Dana, and two sons, Vytenis and Rimas, two good Lithuanian names, their families and many relatives here in Lithuania as well as friends and so many associates. He leaves behind a lasting legacy.

Now, I met Tony way back in 1992 when he looked at the family name of

politicians running for office, and my colleagues here, who I have served with for many years, know that I have focused some of my extra time on Baltic issues, which is Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Not because I have a strong Baltic number of citizens in my district, and, in fact, it is very little, but Shimkus is ethnically Lithuanian.

Tony, seeing that name said, and being Republican, says, oh, I found a guy who will help me remember the persecution of the Baltic countries and help bring freedom, NATO enlargement, EU ascension to the Baltic countries.

He adopted me, in essence, and he encouraged me to not only be involved here on the floor, but really be involved in what for me is four generations removed. He is one generation, I am four generations.

Tony gave me this photo back on October 18, 2002, to the Honorable John Shimkus, we are proud to have you as an honorary member while we continue the Reagan legacy, Lithuanian Republican League of Illinois, Anatole Milunas. This is a photo of President Reagan when he is campaigning in Chicago. Now I am a down-stater, I am more by St. Louis and what we call southern Illinois. This was a picture Tony was very, very proud of. This was at an ethnic festival, then candidate Reagan was there. Tony handed him this bumper sticker that said, "I love Lithuanians," and here is President Reagan holding this up.

As we know, it was President Reagan that was in Berlin and said, Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall, which is all part of the fall of the Soviet empire and the freeing of millions of people in what we call the captive nations.

I was glad to play a small part in the movement to enlarge NATO and bring in the former captive nations that love democracy and freedom, willing to take and pay the sacrifice, transform their militaries and be true allies.

One of the reasons why I was able to do that is because of the mentorship, the friendship, the love, the compassion of this U.S. citizen who was born in Sauliai, Lithuania, who came to this country with nothing, lived the American dream, was a great citizen, but had an appreciation for his homeland.

GAS PRICES

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the new Democratic leadership that will finally allow the U.S. House of Representatives to address high energy prices. Under prior Republican leadership in the House, the oil industry enjoyed years of record profits, record high gas prices and minimal oversight and price manipulation.

Curiously, in September and October of 2006, just before the November elec-

tions, gas prices dropped an average of \$.60 per gallon compared to the record high prices of last summer. This \$.60 drop in gas prices occurred despite the fact that there were pipeline disruptions in Alaska and indications that OPEC would cut oil production. Department of Energy's statistics show us that while gas prices dropped an average of \$.60 a gallon in September and October, the crude oil price only dropped 10 cents a gallon.

If you listened to National Public Radio this week, you would have heard that there is evidence that the oil companies intentionally influence gas price fluctuations, and a \$.60 drop was done just before the election to influence the November elections.

For years, the American Petroleum Institute, the oil companies' main lobbying group, has spent millions of dollars on public relations campaigns to convince the American people that gas prices are a direct result of crude oil prices, not oil company practices. But yet we have a 60 percent drop in gas prices, but only a 10 percent drop in the price of crude.

Ignoring their own PR, oil companies were able to significantly reduce the gas prices in September and October without a corresponding decrease in their crude oil price. Some consumer advocates, such as the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights, have accused oil companies of purposefully reducing gas prices in the months before the election to help Republican candidates.

Since November, gas prices have already increased an average of 15 cents a gallon. This is not the first time the oil companies have been accused of attempting to manipulate markets for their benefit.

Internal memos from several oil companies written in the 1990s have revealed that the big oil companies have worked to limit refinery capacity here in the United States, allowing these companies to control the supply and cost of gasoline.

In May of 2006, the Federal Trade Commission released its report titled Investigation of Gasoline Price Manipulation and Post-Katrina Gasoline Price Increases. In this report, the Federal Trade Commission found that after Hurricane Katrina refiners, wholesalers and retailers charged significantly higher prices that did not result from either increased costs or market friends.

FTC Commissioner John Liebowitz, in a statement on the report, acknowledged that, and I quote, "that the behavior of many market participants, on balance, leaves much to be desired."

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Democrats have repeatedly urged the House Republican leadership to protect America's pocketbooks and not that of Big Oil. Nonetheless, the Republican leadership refused to take action last fall on high gas prices. The American people have now chosen a new direction with Democrats in charge.