



Rodney Alexander / Louisiana's 5th District
UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN

THOUGHTS FROM CAPITOL HILL

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August 1, 2008

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Stubborn Leadership Refuses Vote on Drilling

House Majority Votes to Adjourn Without Addressing Bill to Lower Gas Prices

WASHINGTON, D.C. – I was not quite ready to leave Washington for the August district work period this year, though I always look forward to the month and the extended time I have to travel around our sprawling district and visit with individuals, groups and businesses from all over our area.

In fact, 211 of my colleagues and I voted not to adjourn.

The reason, of course, is that we knew we had unfinished business – the House has still not passed legislation to lower gas prices.

The vote was tight, 213-212, but the House adjourned today and will not reconvene until September.

Though disappointing, this final kiss-off is not surprising, considering House majority leadership's blatant disregard for every single effort those of us serving in the minority have made over the last several months to address our nation's energy crisis.

Their obstinacy, however, has been equally matched by our own unyielding determination to help Americans who are suffering from the effects of high gasoline prices. Over the last several months, House Republicans have introduced multiple bills that were recently rolled into one comprehensive piece of legislation called the American Energy Act.

The American Energy Act addresses every aspect of the energy crisis; it will increase the supply American-made energy in environmentally sound ways, improve energy conservation and efficiency, and promote renewable and alternative energy technologies.

Among its many provisions, the bill would lift the Congressional ban on drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), which experts say could yield 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 86 billion barrels of oil, providing a decade's worth of oil for the United States.

Multiple polls have shown that the majority of Americans support increasing oil drilling in the United States. For example, a CNN/Opinion Research Poll conducted in early July revealed that 73 percent of Americans favor offshore drilling for oil and natural gas in U.S. waters.

House majority leadership ignored these polls and refused to allow a vote on the American Energy Act. What's worse, they never even attempted to produce a plan of their own.

Yet, if those serving in the majority believe the sound of the gavel pounding on the Speaker's desk was their cue for escape, they are forgetting who they are going home to this August.

They are going home to the people they were elected to represent, the people who cried out for help and were ignored.

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