Mister Speaker, in the great debate over oil and gas prices, there are actually many things we can all agree on.We agree that our dependence on foreign oil endangers our environment, hurts our economy and weakens our national security. Our disagreement lies in potential solutions.

I believe that in order to lower gas prices we can and must crack down on oil speculators, end big oil handouts, invest in public transit and electric vehicles and increase corporate average fuel economy standards. The other side of the argument would have you believe that all we need to do is increase our domestic oil resources and remove regulations – regulations that have purportedly forced us to look outside our nation's borders for oil.

Our answers do not lie in more oil. Our answers lie in conservation and smart investments.

Talk about smart investment – every increase of one mile per gallon in auto fuel efficiency yields more oil than can be found in two Arctic National Wildlife Refuges. An improvement, right now, of 2.7 miles per gallon would eliminate our need for all Persian Gulf oil. But, it's not a question of simple domestic supply and demand either, another argument the other side of this issue will use.

Oil prices are set on a global oil market. Historically, such small increases in U.S. production have had little or no impact on world oil prices. The US Energy Information Administration, or EIA, states in a 2008 report that Arctic Refuge oil production "is not expected to have a large impact on world oil prices," noting that OPEC "could neutralize any potential price impact of ANWR coastal plain production by reducing its exports by an equal amount."

Again, our answer does not lie in increased domestic oil production. Our answer lies in conservation, and in a solid commitment to investment in renewable energy resources. Recent increases in conservation and use of alternative technologies has cut our nation's projected need for imported oil between now and 2050 by more than 100 billion barrels. That's ten times more benefit than we might be able to get during the same period from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge – without sacrificing one of our nation's most valued wilderness ecosystems.

In the past few years we've taken small steps to focus on conservation rather than production. In late 2007, corporate average fuel economy standards, commonly known as CAFE standards, received their first overhaul in more than 30 years. This was a huge step in the right direction, but there remains much work to do.

The bills we will consider in the coming week will endanger our environment, hurt our economy and weaken our national security. It seems to me these are the very same concerns we have with an overarching reliance and addiction to foreign oil.

H.R. 1229 and 1230 supplant our standing environmental policies, tell residents along our coasts we don't care how they feel about drilling in their waters, damage the ecosystems the industries along our coast rely on and go against what military experts have been saying about drilling.

Just weeks ago, several former senior military officers shared their thoughts and concern. "America's dependence on oil constitutes a clear and present danger to the security and welfare of the United States," they wrote. And they continued to say that they are concerned about Congressional efforts to undermine the agencies charged with overseeing extraction.

What they're saying is, it's important to reduce our dependence on foreign oil for national security's sake. And, it's important to retain regulatory authority to oversee drilling and extraction of oil and gas. Then, you follow that it is important to regulate our extraction in order to protect our nation.

These bills do not offer solutions. And, what's worse, *a full year* following the disaster at the

Macondo deepwater well, we have yet to reform our Outer Continental Shelf policy. But, again, you don't need to take my word for it.

The US Energy Information Administration put out a 2009 report, comparing the difference between full, unrestricted offshore drilling and restricted offshore drilling. EIA found that, in 2020, restrictions on drilling versus unrestricted access had no impact on costs. The cost per barrel was identical. And in 2030, indiscriminate drilling would lower our gas prices by just *three cents*
. Three cents!

Take the calls for drilling in the Arctic Refuge as another example.Even at peak production in 2030, Arctic Refuge oil would account for only six-tenths of 1 percent of world oil production and only two-point-four-percent of US oil consumption.

We *can* proactively move our nation toward reducing our dependence on foreign oil so that we can take control of our energy future, protect our nation, our economy and our environment, and we must.

Our lives, our dollars and our safety depend on it.