

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Ose). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. Blumenauer) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to spend a few minutes this afternoon discussing the situation we face ourselves today in terms of dealing with the homestretch of the year 2000 election. There is, I understand why we have seen in many expressions of public attitude, a sense of confusion. We have heard the Republican candidate for President, Governor Bush, talk about his concern about the gridlock and partisan bickering here in Washington, D.C., trying to make it some aspect of his campaign, that somehow this would be an advantage of his candidacy, somehow either not knowing, caring or not being honest with the fact that it is his party that is not dealing with allowing partisan solutions to come forward.

As is known to every Member of this Chamber, there was a bipartisan solution to the issue of a Patients' Bill of Rights that was passed with overwhelming Democratic support and a number of Republican supporters as well, a significant majority of this Chamber. But unfortunately the Republican leadership refused to allow a fair and honest discussion of this proposal to move forward and decided to appoint members of the conference committee who actually disagreed with the overwhelming sentiment, the overwhelming bipartisan sentiment of this Chamber.

In the area of efforts to reduce gun violence, we had an historic opportunity last year when finally there was a little glimmer in the United States Senate where there were some provisions that were passed that would have been small steps towards reducing gun violence, a huge concern for people around the country.

One of those, the gun show loophole, for instance, had bipartisan Senate support, would have had an opportunity for passage here, but this legislation has been bottled up in a conference committee by the Republican leadership that will not meet with the Republican Senate leadership and bring legislation to the floor of this Chamber. That juvenile justice conference committee has not met since last summer; not the summer of the year 2000 but since August of 1999, losing an opportunity to have a bipartisan solution towards reducing the epidemic of gun violence.

Perhaps nowhere is the stark differences between the candidates more clear than dealing with the area of the environment, and I wanted to take the opportunity today to have an opportunity to discuss these issues.

I notice that I am joined by my colleague, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DeFazio), a senior member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, a senior member of the Committee on Resources, someone who has been involved with the issues of the environment since he and I served together as local officials in Oregon more than a decade ago. I am pleased to yield to him at this time for some comments about the environment, the year 2000

election, and the issues that are facing us.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. Blumenauer), for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the area of the environment is perhaps where we find the most stark contrast both between the parties here in the House and between the Presidential candidates. For a minute I would like to turn to energy policy because this is very much on the minds of my constituents.

In the West, where there are long distances between towns and many of my constituents live in rural areas, there are no mass transit alternatives and the high price of gasoline is a real problem for my rural communities. Here back, here in the East, where we are stuck today, people are very concerned about projected heating oil shortages, huge run-ups in prices of heating oil and, of course, the energy industry not being particularly competitive. The natural gas folks have taken the opportunity to quickly jack up the price of natural gas to follow that of oil. So even if adequate supplies are available for people in the East to heat their homes during this coming cold winter, the prices are going to be considerably higher than last year.

So I believe it is worth examining, particularly, the two candidates for President on the issue of the future of energy policy and how we got here. How did we get into this pickle? Did we not learn back with the gas crunch, back in the 1970s, when people had to stand in line and they had what, the red and the green flags? And people got in fights in lines for gas stations, and you would have to get up two hours before you went to work to go sit in line to buy gasoline for your car. It seemed initially that the U.S. learned a lesson.

In the Carter administration, we began a very aggressive policy of development of alternative fuels, conservation, renewable resources; but it all came to a screeching halt with the election of Ronald Reagan. And unfortunately, although the Clinton administration has tried to restore funding in those areas, we have to remember that for the last 6 years, 6 years, Governor Bush likes to talk about well, why has the Vice President not delivered on this or that or that? Why has he not done more on conservation renewable resources, because he has been confronted with a Republican majority who is in thrall to the oil companies. That is why. They do not want conservation renewables. They do not want alternative energy development, and it is really clear. If we just look at this year's budget, we would see that as of this date, the Republicans have cut renewable energy resource \$106 million below the President's request in the energy and water bill, and passed a \$211 million cut in the President's request for energy research in the Interior bill.

What is their solution? Well, we are not quite sure. I mean, Governor Bush and a number of prominent Republicans have talked about drilling in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge.

Now let us set aside the issues of that spectacular and distant place and the potential for environmental degradation. Just look at the practicality of what they propose. It is laughable. The pipeline today, which is coming from Prudhoe Bay, and I have been to this area, is full. It is full. And it is pumping oil as quickly as it can to the coast, where it is being loaded as quickly as they can on tankers. Now, that should be of some help to us, particularly in the West. But guess what? The Republicans passed legislation at the request of two oil companies in 1996 to export all of Alaska's oil.

They have a short memory. We made a promise to the American people. The American people paid for that pipeline, and they were promised none of that oil will go overseas. Guess what? Every single drop is going to Japan and China, where they are paying a lower wholesale price than the same oil companies are charging their refineries on the West Coast for oil which they obtained elsewhere, but profits are up 300 percent. So their solution is we should drill in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge, I guess so we can export oil more quickly to Japan and China.

I am not quite certain how that helps, but that is the one thing that Governor Bush has been able to say about this.

It is clear he cannot say much more, nor can the Republicans over there if we look at the campaign and expenditure reports: Massive contributions from the oil industry. I mean, it is pennies to the oil industry. Their profits are up 300 percent; seven billion dollars in the last quarter, an absolute record. They do not want anybody to rain on their parade, and raining on their parade means we do serious things in this country for energy independence, for conservation, renewable resources, fuel economy standards, mass transit. And time and time again our colleagues on that side of the aisle try and kill mass transit. They are engaged right now in trying to kill off Amtrak, becoming the only major industrial nation on Earth without a passenger railroad.

They have sat back and delayed better fuel economy standards. Do you really believe Detroit cannot make more economical automobiles? I really think they could; but if they are not forced to do it, well, why should they? And our colleagues on that side of the aisle have been very willingly working with the oil companies and a few of the automobile companies to set back those standards. They do not want to save oil. They do not want to save gas. In fact, former

Representative Cheney, the Vice Presidential candidate, felt that his job as the CEO of the Haliburton Company, an oil exploration company, was to drive up the price of oil and he was engaged, as CEO of that company, in colluding with the OPEC countries and advising them to restrict production to drive up the price.

Of course, it helped his stock options when he left the company. He said very proudly in the debate with Senator Lieberman that he had not made his dollars in the public sector; he made them in the private sector. Well, guess what? He was playing golf 5 years ago as a lobbyist, a former Member of Congress, with the CEO of Haliburton who took a real liking to him. They had a great time, a good round. He said, I think you ought to take my job, Dick. I am retiring. And he did. So he went from a guy with a lot less than a million bucks to a guy with many millions by working for this oil company.

So we have to wonder, who is going to dictate oil policy in the coming administration?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I too was struck by that comment about having made his money in the private sector, not sullyng himself with government. But is it not true that the company for which he went to work and some of the performance bonuses that he has earned have been a result of massive government contracts, for example, with the military?

Mr. DeFAZIO. Well, if the gentleman would yield back, in fact, yes, Haliburton had very large government contracts; and I am certain being a former Defense Secretary may have helped a little bit there, but there is also now some question being raised about whether or not in carrying out those contracts that there was some impropriety. And, in fact, there are investigations ongoing on whether or not the taxpayers were defrauded.

So not only was the gentleman given a job which took him from being worth not very much to being a multimillionaire in a very short period of time, in conducting that job, his company was doing business with the Defense Department, where he formerly was head of the Defense Department, and is now under investigation for impropriety. And, thirdly, of course, one way they did raise their profits was by laying off lots of American workers. So this is really a record to brag about.

All that leads back to the point that I was trying to make earlier, which is the Governor of Texas came up through the oil industry, has received massive campaign contributions from the oil industry. His Vice President worked in an oil services industry and has become a multimillionaire by dint of a very short stint there and some very generous stock options and

other pensions and things. And their public articulations are ridiculous on the issue of energy independence or getting down the cost of fuel in this country, conservation or renewables.

They are proposing things that are absurd. Drill ANWR to ship more oil, which they support, to Japan and China, I guess. Yeah, they need oil and gas in Japan and China. I grant you that. So I really have got to wonder what the future would look like for Americans if we find that Exxon, Mobile, BP, Amoco and whatever the name of the one giant oil company is these days is sitting right there in the White House. I do not think that that is going to be a very pleasant future for American consumers and people certainly need to think about that.

Not only is there an environmental threat from not dealing with energy efficiency and conservation and renewable resources, which is very large and goes to the issues of global warming which they do not believe in, but there is also an immediate threat to the American public and to the American consumers from the outrageous and extortionate prices that they are being charged by the oil cartels under the excuse of restrictions with the OPEC countries which Vice Presidential nominee Cheney advised the OPEC countries to do. But perhaps since he gave them that advice when he was an oil executive, if he becomes Vice President he will give them different advice and tell them to raise production and lower prices. We can only hope that he will be more generous and enlightened if he achieves office.

I would be happy to yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman referencing the issues that we are facing regarding energy and global warming. These are part and parcel of the critical elements that we are facing here in the year 2000 election. I do not think it has been given quite the currency that one would have liked. But just again today on the editorial page of The New York Times, there was a reference to a new report that is coming forward, the third report from the group that was set up after the Kyoto Accords to try and monitor this, with over 50 recognized experts now finding not only is the consensus of scientific opinion stronger than ever that we have, in fact, contributed to the impacts of global warming that, in fact, it is accelerating but that it may be actually worse than we thought over the course of the next 100 years; that the increase in temperature may be over 10 degrees Fahrenheit over the course of the next century. And in that context we are faced with a Republican ticket that does not have a program or a proposal dealing with global warming.

In fact, George Bush, Sr., derided Vice President Gore for his interest, his concern and his leadership about this issue. You may recall him being dismissed as the ozone man in the 1992 elections.

Mr. DeFAZIO. If the gentleman would yield on that a second, we might note that this spring the depletion of the ozone layer over Antarctica is the worst in recorded history and extends well up above parts of New Zealand and Australia, and last summer for the first time we had significant ozone problems over the North Pole. So it is extraordinary that anybody would have derided someone for raising that very serious issue, both of global warming and ozone depletion, which is so detrimental to the future of our planet.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I would just take just one brief pause here, reclaiming my time, because I think it does touch on another central issue of the year 2000 election, and that is the incredible claim that is being made by some that there is basically no difference between Vice President Gore and Governor Bush in terms of which of these gentlemen would be elected to be President.

In fact, I found it interesting that there are some who are claiming, first among them Ralph Nader, a gentleman who for years I have watched, and I have admired some of his work; just right out of college, one of my first opportunities for public service was at a local university where I had a chance to play a small role in helping facilitate the Student Interest Research Group in Oregon. I admired Mr. Nader and some of the Raiders. But somehow, to hear Mr. Nader suggest that people should vote for him because there is no difference between the two candidates strikes me as outrageous. I think there will be an opportunity in the course of our conversation here to point out some of those differences.

I note with interest that the Republican Party is now starting to use some of the words of Ralph Nader. They are putting on in effect ads for Nader, because they are hopeful that they can use this to undermine the support for the Vice President. I guess it is something that one has come to expect from the Republican campaign; and sadly, I am hearing from Mr. Nader that they cannot quite distinguish the difference. They are unaware of the difference between, or they are not willing to admit the difference between the two gentlemen on issues of reproductive freedom, which has inspired the National Organization for Reproductive Rights, NARAL, to have to take out ads pointing out the threat that would be posed to women's right to choose her reproductive health options. Governor Bush does not support a woman's right to choose, versus the President in the form of Al Gore who does, and the impact that this would have on the decisions for people that would be appointed to the Supreme Court.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, sometimes we have to find a little humor in dire circumstances. I did see a cartoon which is very illustrative of the difference between Governor Bush and Vice President Gore on appointments on the Supreme Court. It was a cartoon which showed a Supreme Court made up entirely of Justice Scalia and Justice Thomas. Of course, Governor Bush has said, and remember, his father thought that Mr. Thomas was the most qualified person for the job, and now, of course, his son has said that he thinks that Thomas, being loyal to his dad, I guess, and Scalia are the shining lights on the Supreme Court and he wants to replicate them on the Supreme Court. His appointments would be more Scalias and Thomases.

Well, we can throw out a woman's right to choice with the first appointment of a Scalia or Thomas clone. With the second appointment of a Scalia or Thomas clone, we can throw out the Civil Rights Act and a whole lot of other very important Federal laws that are based on Supreme Court decisions that would be revisited by a very radical right-wing court, and that is inevitable under his stewardship as President.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, just reclaiming my time briefly, it is interesting that people are talking about the fluid political situation that this Presidential election, it seems that each poll shows jockeying around the country and there are people looking at whether or not they are ahead in the electoral college or not, but clearly it is a fluid situation and I think most commentators believe in the next 10 days it could go either way. Certainly we have watched the struggle for control of the House of Representatives. Most pundits feel the House is very much in play. Some even think that it is possible that the Senate may change hands, but certainly there is a momentum toward the Democratic side over there.

One thing that we have not talked about is how much in play the third branch of government is, the Supreme Court, and I appreciate the gentleman's reference to the close nature of many sensitive decisions. The Washington Post recently had an analysis of the recently concluded term of the Supreme Court, where they analyzed 19 key decisions, and eight of the 19 decisions were 5-4 decisions that could turn on the appointment of, as the gentleman says, one or two justices.

We have recently completed the longest period in 177 years without an appointment to the Supreme Court; 177 years have passed since we had this period of over 6 years before an appointment. We have three over the age of 70 who are on the Supreme Court; we have some who are cancer survivors. There is, in all likelihood, significant changes that are going to take place, and whether it is dealing with the environment, a woman's right to choose, civil rights, as the gentleman mentioned, or the balance between the Federal and State governments,

there are huge issues that hang in the balance, and perhaps at no time in our Nation's history for the last 40 or 50 years has the Supreme Court been so in potential of having a dramatic shift.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, a lot of the public does not focus on this on a daily basis, and neither do I. I mean, the Supreme Court is that building over there somewhere. But that is the

bulwark we have against bad legislation, bad laws in this country. It is the bulwark we have for our Bill of Rights, our precious individual liberties. Just recently, snuck through the Congress in the intelligence bill is an Official Secrets Act for the United States of America.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I beg your pardon?

Mr. DeFAZIO. An Official Secrets Act. It was made part of the intelligence bill which, of course, we cannot read before we vote on it, and it was put in it before anyone knew it was there. They do have a special room where you can go and read it if you want, but you cannot talk about it, so I do not go and read it. But they put in a clause which would establish an Official Secrets Act in the United States of America. Not even just for national defense purposes, but for anything that any government bureaucrat who is anywhere in the government who has a stamp that says, classified, they can stamp anything on their desk 'classified,' and anybody who discloses it or second- or third-hand prints it in the newspaper or talks about it, even a Member of Congress, would be subject to criminal penalties.

Now, would we ever know about the problems created at the Department of Defense in acquisition or the problems in other parts of the government if all of the States could just be simply classified? So we are going to be turning to the next Supreme Court unless we can get this bill vetoed by the President and sent back down here to strip out the new Official Secrets Act. We will be turning to the next Supreme Court to see whether or not our precious liberties maintain any sort of modicum of control over the government. I mean that is extraordinary. Just think about it. It is not just the woman's right to choice. It is civil liberties, it is States' rights, and in this case, it is free speech. And these things are all important.

Mr. Speaker, our current obscene system of campaign finance came from a bad Supreme Court decision. The American people are pretty sick of what is going on with the just unbelievable millions and billions of dollars this year, more than \$1 billion, being spent on the

campaigns for elected office, and that is a result of a well thought-out reform adopted after the Watergate scandal being thrown out in a bad Supreme Court decision. They affect our everyday lives. It is important. And to have Governor Bush say he wants to have Scalia, Thomas, Scalia, Thomas, Scalia, Thomas as the Supreme Court, and we look at their decisions. It is going to be a very grim day if we care about any of those things.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, briefly reclaiming my time, I appreciate the gentleman's concern, and I think we ought to note at this point that it actually goes, of course, far beyond the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is the ultimate law of the land. It does symbolically capture our attention; it is something we can focus on. But, of course, as the gentleman well knows, we rely heavily, in terms of our work in the Federal Government, in enforcement of rights from environment to choice to consumer protection; it is a rare decision that gets to the Supreme Court.

Day in, day out, these are decisions that are made in the Federal district courts and circuit courts where there has been a log jam that has been created, and again, because the Republicans in the Senate have refused to move forward in a bipartisan way for an appointment to lower-court positions. Oftentimes, these are incredibly well-qualified people, where there is bipartisan support back home. But there is a backlog now, and the floodgates are going to be loose for the next administration, and there will be hundreds of judicial appointments that will seize and control the character of the judiciary for a generation to come.

I would note that we have been joined by our colleague from the State of Oregon (Ms. Hooley), and I am happy to yield to her if she wishes to continue the colloquy.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

As we look at this election and look at what it means to people, I think sometimes as we talk about in this Congress, we have actually stopped a lot of environmental riders. Well, what are riders? What does that mean? What does really affect people in their everyday lives? All I have to do is look back at the time when in 1994, 6 short years ago, when Gingrich and gang took over and some of the policies that they tried to put into effect. I mean whether it was doing away with our clean drinking water amendments or our clean air provisions and laws, and what does that mean to real people.

Well, first of all, when we do not have clean air and we have any kind of a lung problem or one has asthma, I mean, this is devastating to someone if they do not have clean air to breathe. Look at the Bush record and look at what has happened in Texas, and they have some of the worst air pollution in the world. Well, if I have any kind of a respiratory problem, I do not want to live there. I want to make sure our State and our Nation has clean air to breathe. If we look at people's everyday health and how it relates to water, would it not be a shame if one went to the faucet, took a glass, filled it full of water and said well, I really cannot drink that. I have to buy bottled water and the cost of that.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time briefly, I appreciate the gentlewoman's references to the issue of clean air, because this is something research is showing is not just a transitory problem. We have just had published a report in Southern California, which is now no longer the smog capital of the United States.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. It used to be.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. That honor, that distinction has been claimed by Houston during the course of Governor Bush's term of office, that losing this lung function over the course of a few years becomes permanent. They have been able to identify that the smog in Southern California reduces the growth of lung capacity 10 percent and makes people more likely for a lifetime to be hospitalized, for example, for asthma attacks. When we look at the record of Governor Bush in Texas, the smog problems in Texas cities have actually increased in the 6 years that he has been governor.

Mr. Speaker, Texas ranks first in the Nation in toxic air emissions from industrial facilities, discharging over 100 million pounds of cancer-causing pollutants and other contaminants in the air annually. Of the 50 largest industrial companies in Texas, 28 violate the Clean Air Act. Currently, the areas of Houston, Galveston, Dallas, Fort Worth, El Paso, Beaumont, Port Arthur are in violation of Federal clean air standards for ozone pollution. As I mentioned, for the second year in a row, Houston is the smog capital of the United States, surpassing Los Angeles.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, when the gentleman talks about that, again, we have to say well, so what, it is the smoggiest place; but how does it affect people? Well, asthma is now the number one reason that children miss school, the number one reason for absenteeism in our schools today. That is directly related to what the gentleman was just talking about; it is our air and whether or not it is clean air or dirty air.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it strikes me that if Governor Bush was concerned about that environmental threat, we would have seen some manifestation of it, some energy, some passion.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. As Governor-elect, Bush opposed new vehicle emissions testing programs that had been designed and contracted by the State to implement the 1990 Clean Air Act. He called it onerous and inconvenient. As Governor in 1995, he worked out a deal with his legislature to overturn the centralized inspections, because it was too inconvenient. Instead, the decentralized system, similar to the old system except it costs more, the tests were less accurate, and it was easier to evade.

Now we are in a situation. Dallas, for instance, is in noncompliance. His response in the case of Dallas was to argue with EPA to change how they were testing the methodology, not clean it up.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would continue to yield, that is the interesting way to deal with air pollution, of course, would be to the change the standards. I think we can actually expect in a Bush Presidency, if there should continue to be a Republican Congress, that that would happen.

I remember the bad old days before we had a Federal Clean Air Act, and as a concerned graduate student at the University of Oregon, went to a meeting with people concerned about pollution from a local company. And this was before we had a Federal law and the representative of this rather large company that is now known and advertises widely for being environmentally responsible was to say, that is the smell of jobs, and if you do not like it, we will move to Idaho, because they do not care.

Mr. Speaker, that is what happens if you dismantle strong Federal standards, which is exactly

what we know would happen under a Bush-Cheney Presidency, if they had a compliant Congress.

Let me just turn for a second for clean water. We take it for granted. Water is going to become one of the most precious commodities in this century. Wars will be fought over water according to the CIA. In fact, we are close to that in some parts of the world. We are running out of potable water. We take a lot for granted.

At the height of the Republican revolution here, I sat on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, we had a markup that went on for 5 days. We were working on a piece of legislation to reauthorize the expired Clean Water Act. We went through amendment after amendment, trying to fix the problems with the law and lock step, 100 percent of the Republicans voted against us, the Democrats in the minority, and that bill went through the House.

And if Bill Clinton, if we had not had a President downtown saying if that bill gets near my desk, I will veto it, shred it and destroy it, that probably would have become the law of the land, and it would have taken us back actually to the days when any industry anywhere could dump.

This bill actually embodied a new principle, and this is free market economics. Anybody who wants to can dump whatever they want in the water, and the bill said the public would be obligated if they wanted to use the water for something other than a sewer to clean it back up. It would have taken us back to the 1950s and early 1960s when we had rivers here in the eastern United States that actually caught fire. A lot of people are too young to remember that today. That actually happened, the Cuyahoga River and other rivers, they caught fire, they were so polluted, they were so dead.

The Willamette River in our own State was an open cesspool, and it is only because of Federal laws that many of these rivers have begun, begun to restore their health.

We are not yet done with that journey, and it is going to come to a screeching halt if not turning back the clock with a Bush Presidency.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. If I may just reclaim my time briefly, I want to just follow up on one of the gentleman's points, because today many people take for granted the protections of the Clean Water Act. They take for granted some of the progress that came, as the gentleman mentioned, at the expense of a lot of time, money, energy and struggle.

One of the members of the ticket, Secretary Cheney, who has a record that he compiled as a Member of this Chamber, and when we look back at what his work is there, it gives us some sense, perhaps, of his values and what it brings to the Republican ticket.

Mr. DeFAZIO. A voting record is a very good way to understand someone's future conduct.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. If we look at the voting record of then-Representative Cheney, he voted seven times against authorizing clean water programs, often as one of a small minority who voted against authorization.

In 1986, he was one of only 21 Members who voted against the override of President Reagan of the appropriations to carry out the Clean Water Act, one of only 26 Members to vote against overriding the veto of the Clean Water Act, a lifetime record, according to the League of Conservation Voters of 13 percent, one of the worst of that generation.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. If the gentleman will continue to yield, I am going to go back to clean air for just a minute. I know we have been talking about clean water. I want to go back to clean air for just a minute.

The gentleman was talking about the voting record of Governor Bush or the State he presides over, and the gentleman talked about when the pollution went up in Dallas, not wanting to do emission tests because it was inconvenient and it was costly.

I had the privilege, I guess, of going to school in Southern California for a couple of years, and the first 2 months I was at school, September and October, I was sick the entire time. I did not know what was wrong with me.

Finally, I went to a doctor, then I went to another doctor, because I had no idea why I felt so lousy. And then one day, I woke up, and there were mountains behind the college. I said,

where did they come from? A miracle has happened. There are mountains back here. We finally discovered it was the air pollution that had made me sick for 2 months.

Mr. Speaker, in our State, where we do have mandatory vehicle emissions, I go have those. And, yes, it is a little bit inconvenient. It costs me some money, but having had that experience of what happens when you have dirty air, I now gladly go and get my car tested to make sure that I am driving a car that does not pollute.

I just think that is what happens to people every single stinking day that you have that kind of air pollution. People become sick, and it may be inconvenient to go and get your car tested, but let me tell my colleagues, it is a lot more inconvenient to be sick, it is a lot more inconvenient to be in the hospital, and when you look at the number of students that miss school every single year because of their asthma problems, I will tell my colleagues it is well worth it. I cannot imagine having a President who would not care about our clean air.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. The comments the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. Hooley) is making in terms of her personal commitment to the environment, actually, we know from survey research that the American public is willing to pay a little bit for clean air. They are willing to pay a little bit for clean water.

They know that investing in the long run in the environment is something that is important for their future and their children's future. That is why as we look at the two candidates and compare their performances, compare their platforms and their ideals, looking at the performance in the State of Texas is so unnerving for me. Texas ranks near the bottom of all the States in the union in the investments that they make to try and clean up the environment.

One would think that a large State with such huge environmental problems would be maybe working a little harder. But the State of Texas ranks 44th out of all the States in per capita spending on environmental programs.

Mr. Speaker, they are the third worst in the country for toxic water pollution. When we look at areas, for instance, like open space and public lands, the Bush-Cheney ticket has responded that maybe they would like to undo some of the monument designations that we have seen this administration step forward, but looking at what they have done in the State of Texas. Texas ranks 49th out of the States in the amount of money it spends on its State parks.

Governor Bush appointed a commission to look at those problems. I will say that this is an area that has had bipartisan support around the country. Republicans and Democrats in our State support public space, open space, parks.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. They have done it with their dollars, by the way.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. They have stepped up, they approved local initiatives. The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DeFazio) is on the Committee on Resources that has been working with the interesting leadership of the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. Young) and the gentleman from California (Mr. George Miller) to craft CARA, which is currently dead in the Senate, because the Republican leadership will not allow it to be voted on, that passed here overwhelmingly with bipartisan support; but in Texas, the governor appointed a commission to look at it and then would not support that commission's efforts to solve the problems.

They wanted to remove a cap on the sporting goods tax to increase their revenues. He did not support the proposal. The measure died.

He created this task force and ignored the request for additional funding. A year ago on the campaign trail, Governor Bush did not even know how to respond to a question about the CARA legislation. He did not know whether he supported it or not. He certainly has not added his voice to try and break the partisan gridlock on the part of the Republicans in the Senate right now so he could get CARA through this Chamber.

Mr. DeFAZIO. If the gentleman would yield on that, there may be two reasons for Governor Bush opposing this wonderful new program that would not have cost the American taxpayers a penny to better take care of our public lands, to enhance open space, acquire park lands from willing sellers with great private property protections in the bill.

I think perhaps it goes back to where we started our discussion, because this thread runs through everything. Dirty air down in Texas is principally due to pollution by the oil industry.

The money for the CERA bill is money that comes from lease charges offshore oil and gas drilling. These are public lands. These are public resources. We exact a modest royalty when the oil companies do not defraud the taxpayers, for the extraction of that oil and gas. And the law has said for more than 20 years that that money is supposed to flow to the acquisition of open space, conservation, and park lands. And it has not.

Finally, in a bipartisan basis, this Congress came together and said enough is enough. We are going to take that money that is being paid by those oil and gas companies, and we are going to use it for the purpose for which it is intended. We are not going to steal it, and spend it on some other part of the Federal Government or the Pentagon or anything else.

Perhaps Governor Bush's concerns come back to the oil industry again, since he made his fortune drilling rather unsuccessfully for oil, but that is not a prerequisite to making money in that industry. Or Vice Presidential nominee Cheney, who headed up an oil services company that consulted with the OPEC countries and got them to successfully constrain production to drive up the prices, also did well in the industry.

If I could just reference one thing from yesterday that many people might have missed on the floor, we had a debate over something called POGO, not the comic strip; but POGO is the scandal, where a number of oil companies defrauded the Federal Government. That is, the taxpayers of the United States, from paying their lawful fees for the extraction of oil and gas from Federal lands, from lands that were owned by all the people of the United States.

They essentially plea bargained to a one half of a \$1 billion settlement. We do not know really how much they stole; but they plea bargained to that. But this Republican Congress has spent all of its time trying to investigate the people who blew the whistle, not the oil company executives who defrauded the American people of hundreds of millions of dollars. But let us find and get and harass those whistleblowers in the Federal Government who exposed this.

Do we think that those whistleblowers would be able to keep their jobs in a Bush-Cheney oil company administration? I do not believe so.

So to say there is no difference between the candidates for President is absurd, and particularly on all these strains that can come back to the tentacles of the oil industry which has had the largest profits and the largest increase in profits in its history in this last quarter, gouging the Americans every day at the pump, and is responsible for many of the problems we have talked about. Now we are going to put their folks in the White House. I hope not.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, going back to talk about CARA for a minute and, again, a program that really provides open space, provides public lands, makes sure that we take care of our coastline and our coastal resources, and, again, it does not cost the taxpayers money because it comes from the drilling offshore. I believe that program, not only was supported in a huge way here, in a bipartisan way, but supported by most of the Governors in the states.

Now, I do not know, and maybe one of the gentlemen know, whether Bush supported that as Governor of Texas. I am asking my colleagues that because he keeps talking about, 'well, I want to work in a bipartisan way, and I can get the job done.' I cannot tell my colleagues how many times I have heard 'I can get the job done. I can go work in a bipartisan way. I will get results.'

I wish he would pick up the phone and make a call to the Senate President and the Speaker of the House if he cares about that issue or any other issue that we have been dealing with here. I mean, we can go into real Patients' Bill of Rights. He says he supports that, even though he did not.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, he vetoed it.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. He vetoed it, right.

Mr. DeFAZIO. It came along without his signature.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. But he says he supports it. But I am just saying he keeps talking about how he can get this done in a bipartisan way. I wished he would pick up the phone and call some of these people.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that sentiment.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, do my colleagues know if he supported CARA?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that he is now supportive.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Oh, he did not know about it. That is right, he did not know about it. When all the other governors supported it, he did not know about it.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Yes. In response to a direct question, he was unable to indicate whether or not he supported it. He just did not know how to answer that question, according to the San Antonio Express News of June 15, 1999.

But having attempted to do something in Texas, falling short of the mark, not supporting them, it would seem this would be a classic opportunity if he now supports it, if it is 'free money from the Federal Government', and if he opposes 'partisan bickering', maybe he can intervene and say something to the Republican leadership so all it has to do is be voted on. Because we all know, if it were brought to a vote on the floor of the Senate, it would pass overwhelmingly because it is supported by the American public. It just makes too much sense.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, do we need to give him the phone numbers of those people?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it is a concern. But it seems to me that we take a step back

and we look at the approach that has been offered up.

We have talked a little bit about air quality problems in the State of Texas, which are substantial, and they are getting worse as it relates to other parts of the country. Governor Bush has touted his voluntary program to deal with over 700 factories that are not meeting the air quality standards. Many of these have been grandfathered in.

The approach that was touted by Governor Bush under legislation in Texas over a year ago, Senate bill, S. 767, was basically voluntary compliance. Well, in the face of this voluntary compliance, the Texas Air Crisis Campaign has gone back and looked at what has actually happened in the State of Texas.

Of these over 700 factories, only a small number have stepped forward and done anything. The total amount of harmful air pollution from these few dozen plants that are doing anything at all has reduced harmful air pollution by less than one-third of 1 percent. It is an approach that I think is something that most people would not be very excited about applied on the Federal level.

But if we are going to have appointees that are drawn from the ranks of the people that are supposed to be regulated, if we are going to have a judiciary that is populated with people who are hostile to the notion of government regulation, we may be forced to rely on this approach. I think the report is such that it would be a sad one in terms of actually producing results.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I could not find this earlier in my notes. I know we have covered a lot of ground here, but there is so much to talk about that the conventional press is not talking about.

He mentioned the ties of Vice Presidential nominee, former Representative, former Secretary of Defense, former Halliburton Company executive, Mr. Cheney. Mr. Cheney, again, was chief executive for a short 4 or 5 years of this oil services company. During that time, and he says, again, if we recall, nothing to do with the public the fact that they gifted him with \$30 million for his tenure there, 5 years.

Well, their government contracts during that time period doubled to \$2.3 billion. Their two largest customers were, surprise, the United States Department of Defense. Former Secretary Cheney of the revolving door managed to get them contracts with the agency which he headed until just a year or two before that. They also had a contract from the British Defense Ministry.

Then they raked in another \$1.5 billion in government loans from the Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, up from \$100 million before Mr. Cheney took over.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. But it had nothing to do with the government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, this is the private sector making money off the government. But that is his proud record. I think that causes some grave concern. I mean, not only as chief executive was he involved in colluding with the oil ministers of the OPEC countries and urging them to drive up the price of oil, and he succeeded in that effort, but, then after he finished raising the price of our oil and gas by colluding with OPEC, he then turned to the Federal taxpayers to greatly enrich his company, and then to provide him with a huge payoff as he left.

But, remember, he did take some tough steps while he was there. He did lay off several thousand American workers. So he certainly deserved that \$30 million golden parachute when he left. We can certainly understand that.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, it is probably a very small amount of money compared to all the money he brought in off of government.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we are reaching the last 4, 5 minutes of our discussion here today. I did want to accord the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. Hooley) some time if she had some concluding thoughts about the impact of the 2000 election, the environment and the choices that we are faced.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I think this is, and people have said it before, this is probably one of the most important elections we will ever have. It is interesting. I turned on the news last night when I got home, and I watched them talking to many people who were

undecided. One of the things they said over and over again was, well, there is not much difference between the two of them. Well, we like one. We know he does not know much, but we do not like his personality much. So those were the kinds of information that they were talking to the press about. Or I do not know whether I am going to vote.

I guess I want people to keep a couple of things in mind as this election comes up. First of all, one of the things that makes this country so great is that people participate. So voting is absolutely critical. It is really all about democracy. If we want to keep this democracy going, then people really need to participate, and they need to do that by voting.

Then I think they have to really think through what a President does. I mean, a President deals with the Congress. They deal with policy that affects everyday people's lives, day in and day out, whether it is if they can go and afford their prescription drugs, whether there is a safety net for them with Social Security so that, when they retire, if they do not have much money, like my mom did. I mean, she had \$72 a month in her retirement plan. She could not have survived without Social Security.

It is the roads we built. It is making sure that we keep our Nation free. It is how they deal with foreign policy. It is who appoints the Supreme Court. It is who sets the policy, and are they looking out for just a few people, or are they looking out for all of us.

I want them to think very, very carefully about this election. I want them to vote. But this decision is in their hands about who is it that they want for President, to think through the kind of person they want as President and the skills that person has to help each person in this country.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, just on the theme of voting, I hear many of the same things that the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. Hooley) heard on television last night from some of my own constituents. The government is not relevant to me. What you are doing is not relevant to me.

Well, a lot of times it is not. They are right. The fact that we investigate whistleblowers and not oil price company fixing or stealing money from the American taxpayers, it is right, the

government is not relevant to their concerns. It is not relevant, because they did not vote. If one does not vote, the government is going to be run by the special interests who are funding many of the campaigns. People must vote. They have to go out and vote.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I think that is an appropriate tenor on which to close our discussion, because there are opportunities from coast to coast for people to make a difference in this election, because it is so close.

It seems to me that it is important. It is one of the things I could not disagree with Mr. Nader more strongly. There is a huge difference between the record of the most environmentally sensitive Vice President since Teddy Roosevelt, an administration that has done an excellent job with the environment, not everything, maybe, that some of us would want, but as my colleagues have pointed out, having to actually hold back the tide from an antienvironmental Congress led by Republicans who were not sympathetic.

It seems to me that this is an opportunity for Americans to look very clearly at what they want in terms of an administration that is going to govern, not just for 4 years, but is going to determine a judiciary for a generation.

I would hope that people would, in fact, focus on the difference between performance and make a difference, not pretend to send a message, but to really take that vote in a way that will make a difference in terms of the President, in terms of the Congress, in terms of providing the type of political representation they want.

It seems to me that, when we have the most competitive Presidential race in 40 years, the most competitive Congressional race in half a century, and a situation, as I mentioned, we have not seen with the Supreme Court in 177 years, and all of them converge at the same time in this election, it is critical for people to cast that vote carefully because it is going to make a huge difference for them, their children, and for generations to come.