

We are fond of saying around here that the world changed after September 11, but the energy bill did not. This bill is virtually identical to Dick Cheney's energy task force and where the House has been these last 4 years with concerns, notwithstanding the Enron scandal, skyrocketing gasoline prices and demands on scarce oil supplies in unstable parts of the world.

It is ironic that the American public's vision is much clearer than Congress. They want to increase the CAFE standards. The public has very clear views about the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, that it is the last place America should look for oil, not the next place.

They oppose a waiver and relief to the MTBE manufacturers at the expense of State and local authorities and the quality of local drinking water.

This bill is looking at our energy problem through a rearview mirror. It gives too much to the wrong people to do the wrong thing and is dramatically out of step with what the American public wants and needs.

The politics of today and yesterday's policies do not provide an energy road map for the future. It is true that lots of people have been working very hard on this bill, but I would suggest that never have so many worked so hard and so long to do so little to change the direction of this country's energy future.

For the sake of the country, one hopes that there will come a time when the needs and wishes of the public is heard and it will be reflected in an energy policy for this century, cost-effective and rational; preserving the quality of life, rather than operating on the cheap.