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## *House of Representatives*

# OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY, YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND (OR 246) IN CONGRESS

**HON. BOB FILNER  
OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**MR. FILNER:** Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, today is a sad day in the history of Congress. Today one industry has hijacked a political party and that party has bulldozed a poor energy policy through this body.

The U.S. Congress is often held up and revered as the model of Democracy. Yet this bill has been bad news for Americans--and our form of government--from the start. First, the Administration, led by Vice President Cheney, held secret meetings with energy industry insiders to determine what they wanted from an energy policy--what the energy industry wants should not be confused with what the nation needed from an energy policy. Next, after a heavy-handed process, a bill, H.R. 6, was passed in this body. The bill then moved into conference, at which point, the two Republican co-chairs

decided that they would write the nation's energy policy by themselves with no input from Democrats, but with plenty of input from lobbyists looking out for their oil, gas and other energy industry clients. The energy bill went from bad to worse as, at the last minute, many sweetheart deals were added that had never been passed by either body. Never before has the energy industry had such a friend in the White House and such great friends in the Congress--we know now that GOP does indeed mean "Gas, Oil, and Petroleum".

Thus far, I have only addressed the problems with the process surrounding this bill. The problems with the policy are too numerous to name here, but I want to highlight some of the more outrageous:

It does not improve our energy security and does nothing to promote renewable

(over)

energy sources. This bill funnels billions of dollars into the oil and gas industries, making us more dependent than ever on foreign sources for these resources. In fact, only 1/3 of the subsidies in this bill go toward promoting clean, renewable energy that we can find right here in the U.S.A. The policy before us today is stuck in the 20th century and does not take advantage of the advances in technology in the clean and renewable energy arena, and prefers to favor older, dirtier methods to generate our energy supply.

It does not protect our water from contaminants that can cause serious health problems. This bill actually protects MTBE (methyl tertiary butyl ether) producers from product liability suits. MTBE has been proven to be harmful to our health, yet this bill leaves the taxpayers to clean up the mess and lets the producers off scot-free. California, more than any other state has been affected by MTBE. In some cities, many of the drinking water wells are now unusable because of MTBE contamination.

It exempts the oil and gas construction activities from Clean Water Act controls on stormwater runoff. I introduced a motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 6 that

would have struck language that gave oil and gas construction activities a free pass from controlling their stormwater runoff. This exemption makes them the only construction activity that does not have to take measures to ensure that runoff from their construction sites does not pollute our lakes, streams and rivers. Unfortunately, my motion did not pass and this harmful handout to the oil and gas industry remains.

It does not address the problems that caused the California Energy Crisis of 2000-2001. This bill does nothing to prevent the kind of market manipulation that caused energy prices to skyrocket in California. Even the most conservative estimates indicate that California lost over \$9 billion to this manipulation by energy companies. This bill leaves California--and the rest of the Nation--without any protections against market manipulation.

It is for these reasons and many more that I cannot and will not support this awful bill. This bill has been bought and paid for by the energy industry--mostly the oil and gas industries. Unfortunately, all Americans will pay the price for this bad bill.