

Congressman Richard W. Pombo
 11th District, California
 2411 Rayburn HOB
 Washington, DC 20515
 (202) 225-1947
www.house.gov/pombo

Political Tidbits

Bush Plan Balanced, Comprehensive Solution

Congressman Richard Pombo issued the following statement regarding President Bush's national energy policy outlined today:

President Bush has offered a comprehensive, long-term solution to our current energy crisis.

There is no doubt that we are in short supply of energy here in California. We cannot operate in the 21st century with a system from the 1980s. The incredible developments in energy research, exploration and technology mean that we can build needed power plants and increase production while ensuring the highest safety standards and protecting our environment.

Inaction in the past has gotten us where we are now - rolling blackouts skyrocketing prices and an uncertain future. I will continue to work with President Bush on his balanced, comprehensive plan for a long-term solution to the crisis that is gripping California and the nation.

The Bush plan calls for:

- Opening up Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to "environmentally regulated exploration and production using leading-edge technology" and reviewing what other federal lands could be opened to oil and gas exploration.
- Spending \$2 billion over the next decade for research on "clean-coal" technologies designed to reduce emissions of pollutants that contribute to acid rain and smog.
- Streamlining the approval process for new power plants and gas pipelines without rolling back existing environmental restrictions.
- Boosting energy assistance for low-income households to \$1.7 billion a year, a \$300-million increase. The amount would rise even more if federal lands are opened to oil exploration.
- Providing tax credits for purchases of hybrid gas-electric and fuel-cell vehicles, and use of renewable energy sources such as wind, sun and agricultural waste.
- Supporting a "North American energy framework" to expand cross-border oil and gas pipelines and electrical grid connections with Mexico and Canada.

Gephardt on conservation

Top House Democrat Dick Gephardt yesterday called for more conservation to help ease the energy crisis - after hitching a ride to his news conference in a gas-guzzling SUV.

Reprinted from the New York Post

Davis' falls short on promise

California will get only one-third of the new power that Gov. Gray Davis promised to deliver by July 1, virtually ensuring a brutal summer of blackouts for the energy-strapped state.

Davis had pledged to take emergency measures to get 5,000 extra megawatts up and running by summer. Instead, the state will have 1,698 megawatts of the promised new power by July 1, according to the California Energy Commission.

Reprinted from the San Francisco Chronicle

**Congressman Pombo will be appearing
 on the CNN special "The Energy Crunch"
 tonight at 7:00PM, PST.**

Today in History

1681 - Louis XIV sent an expedition to aid James II in Ireland. As a result, England declares war on France.

1756 - Britain declared war on France, beginning the French and Indian War.

1792 - The New York Stock Exchange was founded at 70 Wall Street by 24 brokers.

1881 - Frederick Douglass was appointed recorder of deeds for Washington, DC.

1932 - The U.S. Congress changed the name "Porto Rico" to "Puerto Rico."

1940 - Germany occupied Brussels, Belgium and began the invasion of France.

1948 - The Soviet Union recognized the new state of Israel.

1954 - The U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled for school integration in Brown vs. Board of Education.

1973 - The U.S. Senate Watergate Committee began its hearings.

1987 - An Iraqi warplane attacked the U.S. Navy frigate Stark in the Persian Gulf, killing 37 American sailors. Iraq & the U.S. called the attack a mistake.

1996 - U.S. President Clinton signed a measure requiring neighborhood notification when sex offenders move in. Megan's Law was named for 7-year-old Megan Kanka, who was raped and killed in 1994.

1999 - Alex Trebek received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

From The History of Today

Political Tidbits cont.

Enviro groups fund raising under scrutiny

Could the fund-raising practices of organizations like the Sierra Club and Environmental Defense come under congressional scrutiny? If Rep. Richard Pombo, R-Tracy, has his way, they will.

An outspoken critic of environmental organizations, Pombo said he was "disturbed" to read recently a series of articles in the Sacramento Bee detailing some of the unsavory aspects of being professionally green. The series exposed environmental groups that routinely exaggerate the implications of policies on wildlife in order to fatten fund-raising coffers, and that use the majority of collected funds to fuel direct mail and telemarketing operations rather than charitable purposes.

Pombo also wants the committee to look into groups' use of citizen lawsuits, an avenue many groups have used to make advances in the preservation of endangered species. But many environmental leaders also acknowledge that the use of lawsuits has become an industry in itself.

The Bush administration has proposed slashing all federal funding to enforce court orders stemming from citizen suits, effectively rendering them useless.

House Resources Committee spokeswoman Marnie Funk said Pombo's request is under review.

"Mr. Pombo is a respected senior member of our committee and of course any request for a hearing from him would be given considerable weight," she said.

Reprinted from the Washington Bureau

You can view the series of articles at the link below:

<http://www.sacbee.com/news/projects/environment/index02.html>

This series of articles -- based on more than 200 interviews, travel across 12 states and northern Mexico, and thousands of state and federal records -- explore the poverty of plenty that has come to characterize much of the environmental movement. Some of the highlights:

- Salaries for environmental leaders have never been higher. In 1999 -- the most recent year for which comparable figures are available -- chief executives at nine of the nation's 10 largest environmental groups earned \$200,000 and up, and one topped \$300,000. In 1997, one group fired its president and awarded him a severance payment of \$760,335.
- Money is flowing to conservation in unprecedented amounts, reaching \$3.5 billion in 1999, up 94 percent from 1992. But much of it is not actually used to protect the environment. Instead, it is siphoned off to pay for bureaucratic overhead and fund raising, including expensive direct-mail and telemarketing consultants.
- Subsidized by federal tax dollars, environmental groups are filing a blizzard of lawsuits that no longer yield significant gain for the environment and sometimes infuriate federal judges and the Justice Department. During the 1990s, the U.S. Treasury paid \$31.6 million in legal fees for environmental cases filed against the government.
- Those who know the environment best -- the scientists who devote their careers to it -- say environmental groups often twist fact into fantasy to serve their agendas. That is especially true in the debate over one of America's most majestic landscapes: its Western evergreen forests. A 1999 report by the U.S. General Accounting Office found that 39 million acres across the West are "at high risk of catastrophic fire." Yet many groups use science selectively to oppose thinning efforts that could reduce fire risk.

Weekly Quote

“(T)he key to understanding the (energy) disaster in California is to realize that it is not a disaster - not for everyone. The state's environmentalists like it just fine. For the greens, power outages represent a victory in their 30 years' war against power plants.”

- Columnist Robert W. Tracinski, Creators Syndicate

Wordsmith

mega·watt

Pronunciation: 'me-g&-
"wät

Function: *noun*

Etymology: International Scientific Vocabulary

Date: circa 1900

: one million watts

Reprinted from www.m-w.com

By the Numbers

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President?

Approve

Clinton 4/93 — 56%

Bush 4/01 — 58%

Disapprove

Clinton 4/93 — 35%

Bush 4/01 — 27%

Unsure

Clinton 4/93 — 9%

Bush 4/01 — 15%

These figures were taken from The Tarrance Group Battleground poll conducted April 22 - 24 from a sample of 1000 registered voters. These figures have a 3.1% margin of error.

Comments from the District

"I feel by supporting Napster this preserves the Right to Freedom of Speech." - **Michael Ausk** - 4/18/01

"I think the Chinese government is paying Davis off!" - **Joseph Ferrari** - 4/12/01

"Wish you were a libertarian." - **Dr. Tom Allison** - 4/12/01

"I do not work for the government, therefore, I should not have to give them 20% of my paycheck." - **Monica Curran** - 4/12/01

"The cost to produce energy did not just go up 40% but the price did." - **Kathy Williams** - 4/12/01

"The tax cut would only amount to 100.00-200.00 per year. This won't even pay my PG&E bill for one month." - **Karla Bermudez** - 4/10/01

"The federal government should not be involved in the problems of the States." - **Dennis Haugan** - 4/10/01

"I don't want the govt. to control our energy." - **Darlene Carnes-Meli** - 4/10/01

"I never thought we'd have another governor as inept as Jerry Brown, but Mr. Davis did learn at his masters knee." - **Gregory Virtue** - 4/9/01

"I thank you for standing up for the moral majority and for being our voice in American politics." - **Patrick O'Hara** - 4/9/01

"There should be a compromise for the environment and the needs of all living things INCLUDING HUMANS!" - **John Martin** - 4/9/01

"In your options for who is most responsible for solving the electricity crisis you should have included the PUC." - **Ronald Hoverstad** - 4/8/01

"Had dams been built, there would be no shortage of electricity or water in the state now and for a long time to come." - **Donald Halnan** - 4/7/01

"Your help in keeping Israel strong is very important not only to the jews but to all people who believe that terror is not the answer." - **Ronald Stein** - 4/7/01

"Show me that utility company upper management are making extreme efforts to conserve all energy and I will believe more of what 'they' write." - **Sydney Cutting** - 4/6/01

"California has been bullied by the environmentalists for too long and it is time our representatives put their foot down." - **James Sturman** - 4/5/01

"I would love to see a law passed that would require every new house to be built with a solar energy system." - **Gail Rieger** - 4/5/01

"Congress needs to repeal 'Most favored nation status' - **Roger Berhorst** - 4/5/01

"Gov. should lift all environmental restrictions to allow the energy plants that have been shut down because they have exceeded the allowable limits." - **Rick Merkel** - 4/5/01

"The sooner the Republican leadership can come out from the shadows and band together, the sooner we can begin solving this problem." - **Richard Clausen** - 4/4/01

"Socialism will screw it up everytime." - **Paul Covey** - 4/4/01

"If I am not mistaken, are there not a few power plants that are shut down that could be reopened or ones that are not running at their full capacity?" - **Janine McKinnon** - 4/3/01

"Is this a third world country?" - **Dennis Edwards** - 4/3/01

"We need another dam in California." - **Rose King** - 4/2/01

"Republicans are the majority; yet it seems that for some reason it is necessary to cave in and be 'nice' because you guys don't want to offend anyone." - **Jerome Kinderman** - 4/2/01

"Curb the abuses at the US Fish and Wildlife and Army Corp." - **William Costanzo** - 4/2/01

"Scientific fact needs to be the requirement in future environmental regulatory decisions rather than scare tactics and threats." - **Paul Littlefield** - 4/1/01

"Many Sierra Club members have 99 year leases to some of the best real estate in the High Sierras untouched by any hands but their own." - **Frank Cowsert, Jr.** - 4/1/01

"How many stories will we see on the evening news this summer of elderly people dying from heat prostration in their own homes?" - **Mark Turner** - 3/31/01

"Will the state help me when I go into bankruptcy from paying higher utility bills?" - **Jeri Boone** - 3/31/01

"How can a corporation in this state keep alive and functioning if they spend more than they make?" - **John Moore** - 3/31/01

*You can view more comments on Congressman Richard Pombo's web site bulletin board at the link below:
<http://www.house.gov/pombo/board2001/board2001.htm>*