



## FEELING THE HEAT — GAS PRICES SOAR

American families are feeling the heat this summer - and I'm not referring to the weather.

Energy prices have skyrocketed over the past year. Here at home, regular gasoline is averaging \$3.95 per gallon, up a \$1.00 per gallon since this time last year. Diesel fuel has increased a whopping \$1.90 per gallon over the past 12 months and is currently averaging \$4.73 per gallon.

These staggering prices are draining the American family's budget. From the grocery store to the airline ticket counter, many families are budgeting every penny and canceling their summer vacations.

Surprisingly, the United States is the third-largest oil producer, behind Saudi Arabia and Russia, yet vast areas of potential supply, supply that would help reduce our imports as well as the cost of fuel here at home, have been restricted by Congress.

Opening new areas, such as the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), to energy production and exploring in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) would help alleviate our dependency on foreign resources and global markets.

The OCS is a significant source of oil and gas for our nation's energy supply. The U.S. Minerals Management Service (MMS) estimates there is a total of 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 86 billion barrels of oil in the undiscovered fields of the OCS.

Even more incredibly, Cuba has entered into agreements with companies from seven foreign nations including India, Venezuela, and Malaysia, which could be drilling just 60 to 75 miles off the coast of Florida as early as next year, even though the U.S. has a current ban on drilling off the Florida coast.

ANWR, another great example of our untapped domestic resources, could yield up to 10 to 16 billion barrels of oil, more than twice the proven oil reserves in all of Texas and enough to replace all of our imports from Saudi Arabia. While no one is suggesting we can drill ourselves out of our current energy crisis, we must put all options back on the table.

It is hard to believe that no refineries have been built in the United States in 32 years, and during this same time, 100 refineries have been closed.

While we continue to face soaring costs of living, a slow-

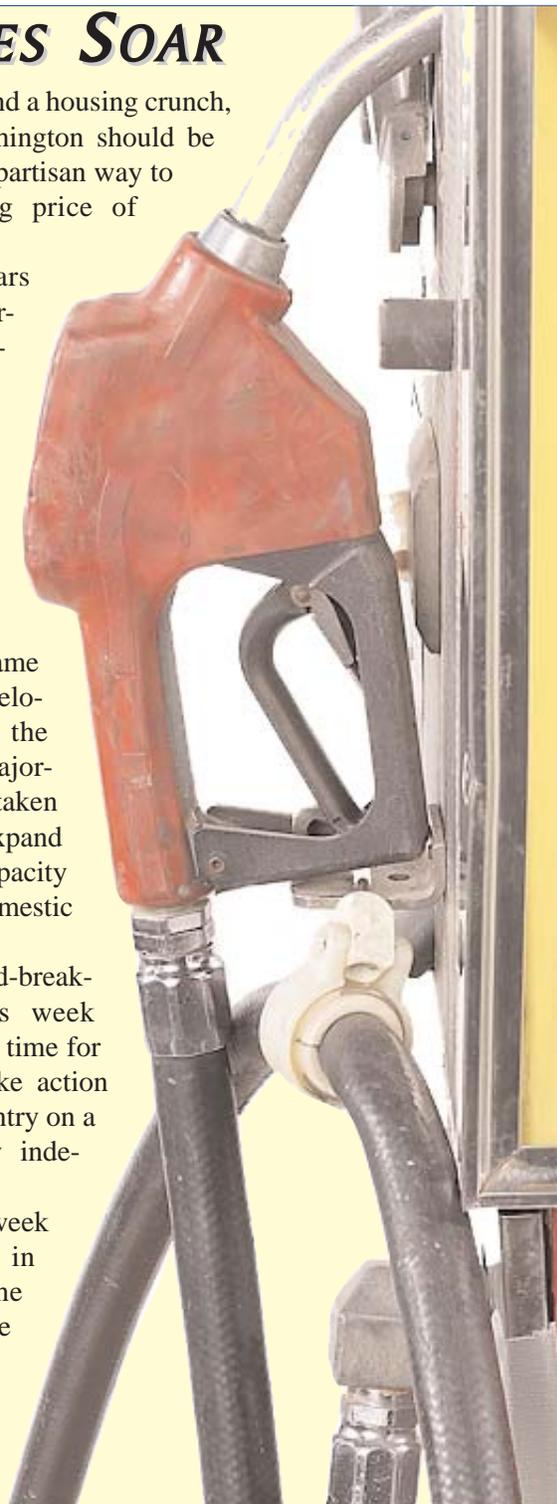
ing economy, and a housing crunch, leaders in Washington should be working in a bipartisan way to curb the rising price of energy.

Two years ago, then-Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi promised the American people a "common-sense plan" to lower fuel prices. Unfortunately, since she became speaker, Mrs. Pelosi and the Democratic Majority have not taken any action to expand our refining capacity or increase domestic production.

With record-breaking gas prices week after week, it is time for Congress to take action and set our country on a path to energy independence.

For each week the House is in session for the duration of the summer, House Republicans

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will use a parliamentary procedure, known as a discharge petition, to try to force the leadership to consider energy legislation geared at lowering energy prices.

The House majority sets the legislative calendar and determines when and what legislation is considered on the House floor. However, pending legislation, which has not been acted on for 30 legislative days, can be brought directly to the House floor for a vote once 218 members sign a discharge petition.

The bills my Republican colleagues and I are asking to be considered immediately are:

➤ **H.R. 3089, No More Excuses Energy Act of 2007** - Opens new American oil refineries, invests in wind, nuclear, and clean coal-to-liquid technology, and opens the Arctic Energy Slope and America's Deep-Sea Energy Reserves to exploration.

➤ **H.R. 2279, Expand American Refining Capacity at Closed Military Bases** - Requires the president to open at least three closed military installations to be the site of new refineries.

➤ **H.R. 5656, To Repeal the Ban on Acquiring Alternative Fuels** - Allows the government to procure advanced alternative fuels from sources like oil shale, tar sands, and coal-to-liquid technology.

➤ **H.R. 2208, Coal-to-Liquid Fuel Act** - Encourages the use of coal-to-liquid technology and authorizes the secretary of energy to enter into loan agreements with coal-to-liquid projects that produce fuel.

➤ **H.R. 2493, Fuel Mandate Reduction Act of 2007** - Removes fuel blend requirements and onerous government mandates that contribute to high gas prices.

➤ **H.R. 6107 - American Energy Independence and Price Reduction Act** - Opens the Arctic Energy Slope to energy exploration that would be limited to 0.01% of the Refuge.

➤ **H.R. 6108 - Deep Ocean Energy Resources Act of 2008** - Allows coastal states the authority to drill 100 miles from their coastlines. It also allows the producing states to share in the revenues received.

I am pleased to have cosponsored all of the above bills. Each of these bills will help to bring down the price of fuel at the pump, and I urge my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike, to join with us in passing these worthy bills.

The time to produce meaningful, long-term solutions to our nation's energy challenges is now.

*While this picture is clearly a joke, it represents what we are all feeling when we fill-up our tanks at the gas station.*



*The students I nominated this year to our nations' service academies joined me for dinner earlier this month at Ed's Seafood Shed. Pictured with me (l to r) are: Jordan Englert, Jackson; Jack O'Dowd, Mobile; Ben Fisher, Mobile; Kyle Sweetser, Mobile; David Marston, Chunchula; Jonathon Powell, Daphne; Brooks Chew, my Academy Representative; John Noojin, Mobile; Bill Davis, Mobile.*

## **From the mailbox...**

*Dear Congressman Bonner,*

*I am writing to thank you for your help and for the help of your staff on my behalf in resolving an issue I had last fall with the USDA regarding my health insurance premiums.*

*The issue is now completely resolved, thanks to your efforts and those of your staff. I wanted you and them to know how much this issue pained my family and how grateful we are that it is all put to rest.*

*May you all have a safe and enjoyable summer!*

*Most gratefully,  
A happy constituent  
May, 2008*

