



U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CHARLIE DENT Energy Update

CONSTITUENT UPDATE

SECOND SESSION • AUGUST 2008

Dear Friends:

As summer draws to a close, it is important that I keep you informed of the issues being addressed by Congress.

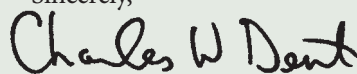
For the first time in decades, our nation's reliance on foreign oil has created very tangible consequences. High energy prices are affecting every aspect of our daily lives and disrupting our nation's economic development. Seeing more of their hard-earned money flowing into gas tanks each day, many Americans have turned to Congress for help. The simple truth is very little can be done quickly to provide immediate relief. Lessening our dependence on oil from unstable areas of the world through the implementation of realistic and sensible policies is the key.

In the short-term, this will allow the United States to stabilize its energy costs. In the long-term, these policies will help our nation transition to an alternative and renewable energy based economy.

In this newsletter I have outlined what I believe are reasonable steps that must be taken to regain control of our energy security. Also, please look inside for some helpful tips that will reduce your family's energy use and save you money.

I hope you are enjoying the summer months. I look forward to seeing you the next time I visit your community.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Charles W. Dent
Member of Congress



Transitioning the United States to an alternative and renewable energy fueled economy is the goal of every member of Congress. However, until our nation establishes a vibrant and diverse alternative energy infrastructure, we must be realistic about the critical role of fossil fuels in our immediate future. Proposals to harness abundant domestic energy resources will provide greater stability during this transition by lessening our harmful and costly reliance on foreign oil and allowing the U.S. to exercise greater influence on its own energy costs.

Opening domestic resources for production is vital and necessary, but alone will not solve the current energy problem. For this reason I support a rational four-prong approach to strengthening our nation's energy security:

- Allow the exploration and development of oil and gas reserves in Alaska and the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) using highly advanced, environmentally sound technologies.
- Use revenue derived from leasing federal lands for production to expand the research and development of alternative and renewable energy technologies, like wind, solar, geothermal, hydrogen fuel cell, biomass and others.
- Avoid implementing punitive legislation that increases the cost of energy production, expands burdensome regulation and contradicts the goal of reducing our dependence on foreign oil by further restricting domestic supply.
- Promote greater conservation through energy efficiency, support public transportation and encourage more Americans to embrace simple practices that reduce consumption.

Advancing these principles separately will have only a marginal impact on current and future energy costs. Instead, we must embrace a truly comprehensive plan and pursue each with determination and vigor. With this in mind, I recently cosponsored the American Energy Act (H.R. 6566), which promotes an 'all of the above' strategy to responsible energy production and conservation.

To learn more about my approach to solving our nation's energy troubles and the American Energy Act, please continue reading.

Outer Continental Shelf (OCS)

Congress must allow greater energy exploration and development in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), where billions of barrels of oil and natural gas remain largely off limits due to a series of restrictions implemented over 25 years ago.

The first offshore leasing moratorium was instituted in 1981, when Congress prohibited new leases off the shore of California. Over time, the moratorium was expanded to include large expanses of territory off the coast of New England, the Mid-Atlantic, the Pacific Northwest, much of Alaska, and a portion of the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

Thanks to advanced technology, today's OCS drilling operations are safer, cleaner and more efficient than ever before. In 2005, roughly 2,900 oil platforms and rigs in the Gulf of Mexico were battered by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, yet none were responsible for any major oil spills. In fact, of the more than 7,000,000,000 barrels of

oil that has been pumped offshore in the past 20 years, only 0.001% has been spilled.

In spite of this encouraging progress, efforts in Congress to lift the moratorium and permit greater offshore production are routinely defeated, making the U.S. the only developed nation in the world to restrict access to offshore supplies. Legislation I have cosponsored, including the American Energy Act (H.R. 6566), repeals prohibitions that prevent the leasing of OCS areas for exploration and production activities.

Last month, President George W. Bush rescinded an executive order implemented by President George H.W. Bush in 1990 barring offshore oil and gas drilling off almost 90% of American coastlines. While this brings us one step closer to developing unexploited OCS reserves, Congress must find the courage to consider proposals like the American Energy Act that lift the statutory ban and allow America to produce more of its own energy.

Alternative and Renewable Energy

Combating our dependence on foreign oil and reducing greenhouse gas emissions can be achieved by developing clean alternative and renewable energy technology. However, Congress must be cautious to no longer indulge in the development of a single energy source like ethanol, which has resulted in skyrocketing food prices. Instead, we must work to diversify the nation's energy portfolio with a focus on domestically derived energy that can transform and revolutionize our transportation sector and electricity generation.

As the founder and co-chair of the Hydrogen Fuel Cell Caucus, I am particularly proud that Congress has passed legislation that will advance hydrogen and fuel cell technology. I cosponsored and helped pass the H-Prize Act (H.R. 632) in June 2007. This bill, which was modeled after the successful Ansari X Prize, will stimulate American ingenuity by awarding prizes to companies that make breakthroughs in overcoming challenges in advancing hydrogen technology.

Additionally, last year I supported the creation of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), which requires the

blending of 9 billion gallons of renewable fuel in the gasoline we consume in 2008. By 2022, this level will rise to an astonishing 36 billion gallons. Of this total, 21 billion gallons will be obtained from advanced biofuels that will help cut our nation's carbon emissions by roughly 20%. These are positive steps, but more must be done to encourage the growth of multiple clean fuel sources.

Making the energy tax incentives created in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPACT) permanent is the next step towards reaching this goal and must be done without delay to ensure investor confidence in clean energy research and development. In 2007, over 5,000 megawatts of new wind energy capacity was added to the U.S. economy and solar technology continued to gain in popularity, as more Americans used the sun to heat and light their homes than ever before. Supporting the development of alternative and renewable energy will help bring down the cost of this technology and bolster its prevalence in our economy. Furthermore, these incentives have created thousands of jobs for the American people and will only create more if made permanent.

Conservation

Our nation consumes roughly 20 million barrels of oil per day. These 20 million barrels represent approximately one quarter of global demand, which has risen to 86 million barrels per day. Though consumption in the U.S. has leveled in recent years, it remains precariously high. Along with increasing supply, reducing our troublesome demand for oil is imperative to combating rising energy prices.

Last year, I supported and Congress passed important legislation that set the goal of improving Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) for cars and light trucks to 35 miles per gallon by 2020. This modification, the first of its kind in decades, will help drive down American consumption of gasoline by making the cars we drive more fuel efficient.

Last month, I supported and the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Saving Energy Through Public Transportation Act (H.R. 6052) to provide an additional \$1 billion of federal support in the next two

years for public transportation agencies to expand transit options throughout the country. The expanded use of public transit, including commuter rail, bus and vanpool services will not only reduce consumption and carbon emissions, but also improve transportation safety by removing cars from today's increasingly congested roads.

While addressing oil consumption, Congress has also implemented policies that affect wider energy use by enhancing energy efficiency standards for home lighting and appliances, and requiring energy efficiency labeling for consumer electronic products.



Energy Saving Tips from the Department of Energy

- Properly inflate your car or truck tires to recommended levels to improve your gas mileage by as much as 3%. Other helpful ways to increase your fuel economy can be found at www.fueleconomy.gov.
- Change your lights to energy-saving compact fluorescent lights (CFL). If every home in the U.S. replaced just one traditional light bulb with a CFL bulb, the nation would save enough energy to light nearly 3 million homes. Visit www.energystar.gov to learn more.
- Contact your electricity provider about installing a Smart Meter, which can help save money by allowing you to better monitor and adjust your electricity use.
- When replacing home appliances, consider purchasing ENERGY STAR models, which will help lower your energy costs and reduce your home's greenhouse gas emissions. Visit www.energystar.gov to learn more.
- Before you design a new home or remodel an existing one, consider investing in a renewable energy system that will provide your home with electricity, water heating, or space heating and cooling. Learn more about energy efficient technology through the Partnerships for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH) at www.pathnet.org.
- Conduct a do-it-yourself energy audit designed to help you identify the best ways to save energy in your home by visiting hes.lbl.gov.

For more useful tips and additional information, please visit the Department of Energy's website at www.energy.gov.



Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)

In 1980, Congress and President Jimmy Carter created the nearly 20 million acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), and set aside 1.5 million acres of the new refuge's northern coastal plain for the purpose of future energy exploration and development.

Fifteen years later, Congress passed legislation to open a portion of this area for production, but the measure was vetoed by President Bill Clinton and never became law. Had production in Alaska been allowed to progress in 1995, it is likely the U.S. would not rely on foreign countries to provide roughly 60% of the oil we consume today. Since the 1990s, attempts to pursue domestic energy production in ANWR have been systematically thwarted in Congress.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates 10.4 billion barrels of recoverable oil currently lie in ANWR -- untapped due to restrictions imposed by Congress. Based on this approximation, ANWR could provide our nation with 1 million barrels of oil a day for 30 years. A recent report by the non-partisan Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates the development of these reserves would deliver \$191.1 billion in corporate income tax and royalty revenue to the federal treasury. Despite these promising figures, a

majority of members in both the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate lack the political courage to lift restrictions on drilling in ANWR.

Since entering Congress in 2005, I have voted consistently and repeatedly to open ANWR for oil exploration. Recently, I cosponsored the American Energy Act (H.R. 6566). This bill permits development in ANWR under the most stringent environmental protection requirements ever applied to a federal energy project and limits the footprint of drilling operations to a mere 2,000 acres on the coastal plain. To put this in perspective, production would be contained to a parcel of land the size of Philadelphia International Airport in a refuge roughly the size of South Carolina.

Perhaps the most visionary component of this bill is a provision that would use revenue collected from ANWR bonus bids and drilling royalties to create a trust fund that would support 18 alternative and renewable energy programs that currently lack federal funding. This is the strategy America deserves -- one that lessens our dependence on foreign oil by utilizing plentiful domestic resources and supports our transition to an alternative and renewable fuel-based economy.

Your input is important to me.

Please let me know where you stand on the following issues and mail this card back to my office. I appreciate knowing your thoughts on these issues.

Drilling for oil in Alaska?

Support Oppose Other: _____

Drilling for oil and natural gas 50 miles off our coast in the Outer Continental Shelf?

Support Oppose Other: _____

Expanding nuclear energy?

Support Oppose Other: _____

Developing coal energy, including clean coal technology?

Support Oppose Other: _____

Do you drive a hybrid or flex fuel car?

Yes No

Have you recently purchased compact fluorescent light bulbs for your home or business?

Yes No

Would you be interested in receiving e-mail updates on current issues in Congress?

Yes No email: _____

Check one: Mr. Ms. Mrs. Mr. & Mrs. Dr. Rev.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Member of a civic organization: _____



Nuclear Power

Today, nuclear power plants generate about 20% of American electricity and represent 71% of all domestic clean-air electricity production.

Unfortunately, the United States has not licensed the construction of a nuclear power plant in over 30 years. The most recent unit completed in the U.S. was the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) Watts Bar 1 reactor, ordered in 1970.

Unlike other zero-emissions energies, including wind and solar power, nuclear energy is not affected by adverse weather conditions, allowing plants to operate at extremely high levels of efficiency. In 2006, commercial reactors generated electricity at an impressive average of 89.8% of their total capacity, according to industry statistics. While I support wind energy and believe it will play a vital role in our nation's electricity generation, it is important to note that most wind turbines can only be expected to run at about 34% capacity. At this level, a 1,000 megawatt wind farm comprised of hundreds of turbines, covering thousands of acres of land, would produce 2.98 million megawatt-hours over the course of a single year. In comparison, a 1,000 megawatt nuclear power plant running at nearly 90% capacity would produce a whopping 7.88 million megawatt-hours in the same period of time.

In addition to incredible efficiency, perhaps the most appealing aspect of nuclear energy is that plants are fueled by processed uranium ore, a raw material primarily produced in the United States, South Africa, Australia and Canada. Uranium is extremely powerful and can produce 3.7 million times more energy as the same amount of coal, America's most abundant energy resource.

In the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPACT) Congress implemented incentives for the construction of new commercial reactors, including production tax credits, loan guarantees, insurance against regulatory delays, and extension of the nuclear liability system. These incentives, coupled with today's high cost of fossil fuel, have helped spur renewed interest in nuclear power among utilities and other potential reactor developers. As a result, roughly 30 proposals to construct new reactors have been announced throughout the U.S.

I believe our nation must embrace nuclear energy as a means of reducing carbon emissions and providing enough electricity to drive our vibrant economy. Furthermore, the advent of plug-in hybrid technology in our automotive sector will help revolutionize transportation in the U.S., but will require massive amounts of electricity. This electricity can be produced in a clean, safe and reliable manner through nuclear power.



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Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

If you're having trouble meeting your home heating and cooling needs, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) may be able to help. LIHEAP can help pay heating or cooling bills, improve home weatherization and assist in energy-related emergencies.

For more information, please visit the Administration for Children and Families website: www.acf.hhs.gov

You can also contact the National Energy Assistance Referral (NEAR) project, a free service that provides information on where you can apply for LIHEAP:

Toll-free phone number: **1-866-674-6327**

E-mail: energyassistance@ncat.org

Or contact the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare:

Phone number: **717-772-7906**

Email: LIHEAPMAIL@state.pa.us

For more information
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For more information please visit Congressman
Dent's website at www.Dent.House.Gov

Or email Congressman Dent at
www.house.gov/writerep/

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Charles W Dent
MC

PreSorted Standard