



United States House of Representatives

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Republican Bill Streamlines Refinery Construction

WASHINGTON – In addition to being the bicentennial of the birth of the United States, 1976 also marked the death of new refinery construction in United States. Indeed, a new refinery has not been built in this country since the plant in Garyville, La., opened its doors more than three decades ago.

In fairness, siting a refinery is not an easy thing to do – it requires infrastructure, large available acreage, tight security and access to ports, rails and major thoroughfares. Thankfully, all of these qualities can be found on abandoned military facilities. Unfortunately, many of these sites remain idle today, while new refinery construction that would otherwise take place there is held hostage by an onerous and bureaucratic process of permits, red tape and unpredictability.

In an effort to streamline that process with an eye on expanding our ability to produce gasoline, Pennsylvania Congressman Phil English will today file a discharge petition, H.R. 2279 the Expand American Refining Capacity Act.

Disasters like Hurricanes Katrina and Rita proved how vital it is for our national economy to have a diverse, strong and reliable energy infrastructure. Those two events made the price of gasoline spike 46 cents a gallon in less than one week – all because they were able to knock out as much as 10 percent of our country's refining capacity.

H.R. 2279 will allow for the President to recommend closed military bases be converted into refineries – diversifying our refineries and making our nation more adaptable during times of disaster.

Local communities take great pride in their military installations as both economic engines and a key link in our nation's security interests. The Expand American Refining Capacity Act will allow former bases to bring those same attributes to the community with new jobs as well as serving help our national security by making American far vulnerable to foreign oil producing states.

America is dependent on foreign oil *and* foreign gasoline – just this past week, for instance, we imported 1.2 million barrels of refined product into this country. Artificially restricting our refining capacity has contributed to that problem, making worse an already unsustainable and, frankly, unsafe arrangement for procuring necessary fuels.

English's discharge petition is part of the Republican strategy to lower energy costs that House Republican Whip Roy Blunt (Mo.) announced earlier this month. The plan is to file one discharge petition each week, with an eye on bringing bipartisan legislation to the House floor. Each of the seven bills are specifically crafted to lower the price of gas and other energy sources by increasing American-made energy, decreasing our dependence on foreign oil and creating jobs here at home in the process.

Courtesy of the offices the Republican Whip.