



Klein Takes Action to Lower Gas Prices, Supports Bold Energy Package

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Representative Ron Klein (FL-22) today strongly supported a package of legislation designed to provide real relief to families struggling to keep up skyrocketing gas prices. The package included legislation cracking down on oil market speculators currently driving up prices, legislation supporting mass transit as an affordable, energy efficient alternative to driving and legislation compelling oil companies to drill land they already control before leasing new land.

“Today, we took critical steps towards bringing real relief to families struggling with high gas prices,” Klein said. “We successfully passed two short-term solutions to skyrocketing fuel costs. The first cracks down on rampant speculation in energy markets currently driving up the cost of oil, and the second keeps fees down for mass transit and public transportation, an affordable, energy efficient alternative to driving.”

“I am extremely disappointed that a majority of House Republicans blocked passage of the third piece of legislation we considered today, which gives oil companies an ultimatum: drill it or lose it,” Klein said. “As long as this common-sense legislation does not move forward, oil companies will continue to block the 68,000,000 acres of public land that they control which is already permitted and ready for drilling today. The oil companies are refusing to drill on this land and leaving American consumers to pay the price at the pump, an indefensible position at a time when families are struggling. I will keep fighting to see that this legislation is passed.”

The legislative package considered today included:

- The Energy Markets Emergency Act (H.R. 6377), which directs the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) to curtail excessive speculation and other practices distorting the energy market. Experts estimate speculation may be inflating oil prices by \$20-\$60 per barrel. This bill passed with a bipartisan majority.
- The Saving Energy Through Public Transportation Act (H.R. 6052), which provides grants to mass transit authorities to reduce fares for public transportation, giving consumers an energy-efficient alternative to high gas prices. The grants can also be used to expand transit services to meet the demands of increasing ridership. This bill passed with a bipartisan majority
- The Responsible Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act (H.R. 6251), known as the “use it or lose it” bill, prevents oil companies from leasing any new federal land if they currently hold leases for land they are not drilling. This bill was blocked by some House Republicans and was not passed.

“Families in South Florida and across the country are struggling with record gas prices, and the legislation we passed today will bring real relief,” Klein said. “But make no mistake – short-term

solutions must be matched by a bold, national commitment to breaking our dependence on oil. Moving towards clean, affordable alternative energy sources will strengthen our national security, revive our economy and preserve our environment. If Congress and the President support our scientists and entrepreneurs currently tackling this problem, I know that American ingenuity can solve our energy crisis.”

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