

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0530

HENRY A. WAXMAN
30TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

Statement of
Rep. Henry A. Waxman
February 9, 2005

I'm joined this morning by my colleagues from the Energy and Commerce Committee to discuss the outrageous energy bill that will apparently soon be considered on the House floor.

The House Republican leadership has made clear that they intend to pass an energy bill substantially based upon H.R. 6, the Administration's energy bill that passed the house in 2003.

This energy bill is just one part of the Administration's energy policy. According to the Department of Energy, 75 percent of the Bush energy plan has been implemented administratively. Where has it gotten us?

Natural gas prices are up over 40% in the Midwest since the year 2000. Heating oil prices in the Northeast are up over 60%. Gasoline prices have climbed dramatically with crude oil prices setting new all-time records.

The middle class is squeezed. The consumer group Consumers Union recently found that household expenditures for petroleum products have increased by 20 percent in just the past two years. Over the past four years, household expenditures on petroleum have increased by about \$1,000 per year. For all but the wealthiest American families, rising petroleum prices have eaten up the entire Bush Administration tax cut.

On the other hand, oil company profits are also setting records. Just this month, Shell Oil reported the highest corporate profits in the history of the United Kingdom. Exxon Mobil announced the largest annual profit ever made by a public company – exceeding \$25 billion in 2004.

So what does this bill do? It hits up taxpayers for even more giveaways for the big oil companies. And what will we get for our subsidies to the oil companies? Certainly not energy independence.

When we considered the H.R. 6 conference report, the Republican leadership came to House floor to declare their support for the bill. They argued that the nation was too dependent on foreign oil and that H.R. 6 would break our dependence on foreign oil.

How wrong they were. After the House passed the bill, the Energy Information Administration released an analysis of the impacts of this bill. If it is enacted, the nation's need for imported oil will still grow 85% in the next 20 years.

I hope no member of Congress thinks it's a good idea to increase our dependence on foreign oil. And it's not only oil. This is a pork-barrel bill, chock full of special interest, favors that blows the budget, steamrolls the states and punches holes in our environmental laws. My colleagues are going to talk more about some of the specifics.

Its time for us to start over on this legislation and see if we can come up with a bipartisan approach that solves the nation's problems – not makes them worse.