

Mahoney Takes Immediate Action to Combat Skyrocketing Gas Prices

(Washington, D.C.) - With gas prices in Florida averaging \$4.14, Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) took action to combat skyrocketing gas prices by co-sponsoring and supporting three key pieces of legislation that will help provide relief to Americans struggling with high gas prices and will make America more secure through energy independence.

(June 26, 2008)

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[Click here to see Congressman Mahoney's Floor Statement on his Amendment](#)

"As gas prices continue to hurt Florida families and our economy, it's time to stop talking and start taking action now. While there are no easy answers, today's fiscally responsible legislation takes significant steps to combating the energy crisis," said Congressman Mahoney. "232 years ago this country fought to gain its political independence. Today, as we approach Independence Day, it is time to fight for energy independence. I am proud that today's action, not only takes steps to lower prices, but also moves us in that direction. "

Earlier this week, Congressman Mahoney unveiled his action plan to stop skyrocketing gas prices. Today's legislation takes significant steps towards moving that action plan into law and it includes:

- The Saving Energy Through Public Transportation Act of 2008. The bill gives \$1.7 billion in grants to mass transit authorities to reduce public transit fares and to help with the escalating operating costs of public transportation, giving consumers a cost-effective alternative to \$4.14 per gallon gasoline. Congressman Mahoney offered an amendment to this legislation today that would reduce barriers to importing Canadian oil by clarifying Section 526 of the Energy Independence and Security Act. Currently, Section 526 prevents the U.S. government from purchasing an unconventional fuel whose carbon footprint is higher than a conventional fuel. Mahoney's amendment ensures that federal agencies can purchase generally available fuels, which may include Canadian oil sands. The bill was approved by a vote of 221-199. Mahoney's amendment passed by a vote of 421-0.

- The Energy Markets Emergency Act. The Act directs the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to use its full authority and most potent emergency tools to curtail excessive speculation and other practices distorting the energy market. Although the CFTC has the authority to take action when they have reason to believe that the market price does not reflect supply and demand, it has refused to deem conditions necessary for an investigation even while oil prices continue to spike. Today's resolution considers the state of our nation's energy situation and demands the Commission take action immediately. The bill was approved by a vote of 402-19.

· The Responsible Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act. The "Use it or Lose it" legislation forces oil companies to produce oil and gas, or diligently develop, the 68 million acres of public land they already have leased, but are not using to produce energy. This legislation was blocked by House Republicans and was not approved.

"I'm disappointed Republicans once again refused to push for more, safe domestic drilling when given the opportunity," added Congressman Mahoney. "Oil companies have already leased 68 million acres they aren't using to produce energy and they ought to be forced to use it or lose it. We know that when the U.S. has less than 2 percent of the world's oil reserves, but uses 24%, we simply can't drill our way to energy independence-but drilling in lands we already have set aside is a small part of the solution."

[Click here to see Congressman Mahoney's action plan.](#)

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