

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2006

Speaker Dennis Hastert  
235 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert:

We are writing to urge you to hold congressional hearings to investigate possible gasoline price gouging and to also consider legislation that would hold accountable those who engage in the practice. With gasoline prices across the country rising to record levels as oil industry profits soar, we believe Congress has an obligation to determine the underlying causes behind these skyrocketing prices.

On Tuesday, April 18, 2006, President Bush expressed his concerns about high gas prices and said, "The government has the responsibility to make sure that we watch very carefully and investigate possible price-gouging, and we will do just that". While we welcome the president's support, it is the responsibility of Congress in its oversight powers to ensure that consumers are not being charged unfairly at the pump.

Just this week, the price for oil increased to over \$70 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, above the previous closing record set in August after Hurricane Katrina. With gas prices approaching or exceeding \$3 nationwide, consumers have the right to know if they are paying a fair price for gas.

The need for meaningful action in this area is long overdue. Eighty members of the House wrote to President Bush on September 9, 2005, requesting that he meet with oil company executives to learn why prices are so high and what their companies are doing to ensure prices are fair to consumers. On October 27, 2005, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist ordered the Senate Energy and Commerce Committees to launch an investigation into high energy prices, to determine their cause and investigate possible price gouging. On November 8, 2005, 113 House members wrote to you requesting that you call oil company executives to testify before Congress and explain the relationship between their record profits and the skyrocketing oil and gas prices Americans have been paying for gas. As of yet, the House of Representatives has not taken any meaningful action to look into this matter.

We also urge you to bring to the floor H.R. 3936, the Federal Response to Energy Emergencies Act of 2005, introduced by Congressman Stupak and Congresswoman Herseeth. This bill would give the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) the authority to investigate and prosecute those that engage in predatory pricing from oil companies to local gas stations, with an emphasis on those who profit most. This includes oil, gasoline, natural gas, and all petroleum distillates.

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Congress has an obligation to take action on behalf of consumers. President Bush has said that he will support the investigation of price gouging, and it is the responsibility of Congress to complete it. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Paul Delaware

Stephanie Austin

Cole E. Wilder

Marty Meehan

Ben Ray

George Miller

Pat J. Leahy

Jim Moran

Jill E. Brown

Paul Lujan

Gregory M. Costello

Edward J. Markey

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Carolyn McCarty

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Diage E. Watson

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Greg Bj

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Mike Haul

Deir M

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Nick Lujan

Bob Eckart

Leopoldo Bonilla

Anna Cisneros

John W. Olver

Tom Lillo

Jim McDermott

Michael J. ...  
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Louise M. Slaughter  
Bart Borden

Jeanette ...  
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Carolyn B. Maloney

Doris O. Matsui

Tammy Baldwin

Stephanie Tubbs Jones

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Nathan Delahou

Mai Bay

Inez Kaptur  
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Lucille Poyall-Allard

Barbara Lee

Russ Holt

John B. Rosten

Lee Kuntz

Sam McIntosh

Mike Roy

Kid Strickland

Glenn Johnson

Jim Davis

Jim Oberstar

Edly McCollum

Robert E. Anderson

James Langevin

Jim Cooper

Stacy

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