

Center for American Progress Action Fund



September 16, 2008

Dear Representative:

The House plans to debate and vote on the Comprehensive American Energy Security and Consumer Protection Act in the near future. The measure would reduce energy costs for families and includes many provisions to speed the transformation to clean renewable energy and efficiency. The Center for American Progress Action Fund urges that you vote **for this clean energy bill**. **Please vote against the motion to recommit** that will focus almost exclusively on the expansion of oil drilling near protected beaches.

We must address high energy prices as well as rapidly invest in new energy infrastructure, cleaner sources of power, and more efficient use of electricity and fuels. This legislation would sell a small amount of oil from full government stockpiles to reduce prices. It would also establish a renewable electricity standard that requires utilities to produce 15 percent of their power from wind, solar, or other renewable sources by 2020. The bill would extend tax incentives for renewable energy and efficiency and would increase funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program to help families cope with the upcoming winter's higher heating prices.

The Comprehensive American Energy bill would pay for its programs by closing tax loopholes for big oil companies and recovering lost royalties from oil and gas production in federal waters. These oil companies have made record profits as families shoulder the burden of gasoline prices, and they do not need these tax breaks.

CAPAF does not support an expansion of offshore oil drilling into currently protected areas because it would have no impact on energy prices for a generation. The Department of Energy definitively said that "access to the Pacific, Atlantic, and eastern Gulf regions would not have a significant impact on domestic crude oil and natural gas production or prices before 2030."

Nonetheless, the moratorium on drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf expires on September 30th. After that, big oil companies could drill as close as three miles offshore where routine and catastrophic oil spills could cause the most damage. The Comprehensive American Energy bill would continue to prohibit drilling off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and provide up to 100 miles of protection unless states decide to allow drilling 50 to 100 miles off their coasts.

H.R. 6566, the American Energy Act, may be offered as a motion to recommit during floor consideration. This measure could allow drilling within three miles of beaches and does not include many substantial incentives for moving toward renewable energy. Opening up our coastlines for drilling while oil companies leave 68 million acres of currently leased areas unexplored will do nothing to address our dependence on oil and does not provide any long-term solutions to our current energy crisis.

"Green Recovery," a recent study published by the Center for American Progress, found that investments in clean energy yield four times as many jobs compared to oil drilling. The Comprehensive American Energy bill would likely produce more jobs than H.R. 6566.

The Comprehensive American Energy Security and Consumer Protection Act would address the high cost of energy today while laying the groundwork for a more efficient and sustainable energy economy tomorrow. Drilling alone will not solve the problem we face today. We respectfully ask you to support final passage of the Comprehensive American Energy Security and Consumer Protection Act and oppose the motion to recommit. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Winnie Stachelberg

Daniel J. Weiss