

(Washington, DC) - Congressman Wally Herger today announced his support for a new [legislative package](#) aimed at providing relief from high prices and reducing U.S. dependence on foreign sources of energy. The legislative package is broad-based and contains initiatives that range from increasing U.S. oil production and streamlining refinery permitting, to reforming the nation's ethanol mandate and responsibly utilizing coal resources. After cosponsoring the new legislation, Herger issued the following statement:

"We have clearly lost our way on energy policy in America. Families, farms, and small businesses are not only paying record prices for fuel, but we are importing more than 60 percent of our oil supply from foreign countries – making us twice as dependent on foreign oil as we were just 30 years ago. The American people should not be left to simply cross their fingers and hope that OPEC will come to the rescue by producing more oil. Depending upon foreign nations for our economic security is a poor excuse for a sound national energy strategy. America should be a leader in energy production, not dependent upon some of the most hostile and unstable nations in world.

"After years of stonewalling efforts to increase U.S. energy production, Democrats in Congress appear to have finally conceded that more supply is needed to lower prices at the pump. The question now is are we better off if that supply comes from Saudi Arabia and Venezuela? Or are we better off if it comes from America?

"The energy legislation introduced today recognizes that there are positive steps we can take to reduce gas prices. By lifting the ban on new energy production in America, this legislation would make energy more affordable and would improve our energy security. Emerging economic competitors like China and India are not standing idly by debating whether or not to produce more energy to fuel their economy. We need to regain the lead in energy production. I call on Speaker Pelosi to bring this legislation to the floor for immediate consideration."