

(Washington, DC) - Congressman Wally Herger today voiced opposition to H.R. 5351, legislation that would further our nation's dependence on foreign oil and would benefit Hugo Chavez by exempting Venezuelan state-owned CITGO from the measure's tax increases on American energy producers. Herger issued the following statement regarding his opposition to the bill. His floor remarks are also below and can be watched [here](#) .

"In light of new warnings of four dollar per gallon gasoline, the American people are absolutely justified in demanding action to get control of skyrocketing energy prices. However, the latest Democratic energy bill fails to increase American-made energy and would do nothing to reduce prices at the pump. By imposing higher taxes on American energy producers, the measure would lead only to higher fuel prices and U.S. energy manufacturing jobs heading overseas. The Democrat's flawed 'tax our way to energy independence' philosophy also exempts Venezuela's state-owned CITGO, standing to benefit Hugo Chavez. This bill won't solve our nation's energy problem."

FLOOR REMARKS

Mr. Speaker, today's bill is eerily reminiscent of legislation we saw back in August: Modest renewable energy tax incentives, which I have long supported, mixed with a reformulation of billions in new taxes on America's predominant energy manufacturers. Apparently the Majority is more interested in scoring political points than in providing anything close to an energy plan.

The Democrats even make sure to preserve a carve-out that will enable Hugo Chavez's Venezuela-state-owned oil company to claim a U.S. tax deduction. When our constituents ask us to do something about gas prices, they don't want us to raise them. Yet by increasing taxes on U.S. energy manufacturers by more than \$17 billion, this bill creates a significant disincentive for domestic production, decreasing our energy security and increasing our over-reliance on uncertain foreign supplies.

Expanding the diversity of our domestic supplies is one step. That will be accomplished over time through tax incentives such as the energy investment and production tax credits for resources like forest biomass, geothermal, and solar energy. But we can't possibly hope to meet demand by raising taxes and making U.S. production more costly. While it may make a nice talking point, taxes won't help our constituents or make energy less costly. I urge my

colleagues to oppose this bill, and yield back the balance of my time.