

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) joined local business owners today to highlight comprehensive energy legislation, passed by the House of Representatives last week, to make America energy independent and bring down gas prices.

“It is an honor to be joined today by Mohawk Valley business owners who know first-hand how important it is to bring gas prices down in the short-term and invest in new energy technology for long-term economic growth,” said **Arcuri**. “This bill is a commonsense energy solution that includes opening up more off-shore drilling and investing royalties from drilling in new energy sources. I will continue to fight in Congress to bring down energy prices and invest in new job creation for local families and businesses.”

The Comprehensive American Energy Security & Consumer Protection Act (H.R.6899) includes the largest opening of land off-shore for oil and gas development in U.S. history. The legislation would:

- responsibly open up additional off-shore areas for drilling,
- release oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve,
- repeal tax breaks for oil companies, and
- invest in renewable energy.

Arcuri was joined by Mark Barres, President of M&R Heating and Air Conditioning, as well as the President of the Mohawk Valley Chamber of Commerce, Frank Elias, who addressed provisions in the legislation to help local businesses hit by rising fuel and energy costs.

Specifically, the legislation would expand land available for oil drilling by ending the current off-shore drilling moratorium and permitting drilling off-shore for states that offer leases to oil companies - opening up nearly 80% more off-shore areas for oil and gas drilling.

H.R.6899 would also repeal tax break for oil companies and require oil companies to pay royalties already owed to taxpayers. Royalty payments would be invested in developing alternative energy sources - creating millions of new American “green” jobs. This legislation is supported by the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Last week, Arcuri also voted for The Commodity Market Transparency and Accountability Act (H.R. 6604), passed by the House, which would curb excessive speculation in the energy futures markets that has contributed to higher gas prices.

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