

Washington, DC -- Today, U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) discussed legislation to increase domestic oil drilling and lower gas prices, as well as invest in renewable energy sources, at Seneca Meadows' alternative energy generation plant in Waterloo, NY.

“Local families and businesses are struggling to stay afloat with skyrocketing fuel prices that affect every part of our daily lives,” **Arcuri said**. “We must embrace new, independent solutions from both Republicans and Democrats that will bring immediate relief and invest in long term answers to end our energy crisis once and for all. I have consistently supported bipartisan calls to increase drilling and production on existing, open lands and voted just last week to expand domestic drilling in Alaska – increasing supply and bringing prices at the pump down.”

Continuing his work to increase domestic oil supply and lower gas prices for local families, Arcuri voted last week for the DRILL Act (H.R. 6515) mandating the government to expedite leasing of 20 million acres of land in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR –A) for oil production. The NPR-A has an estimated 10.6 billion barrels of oil, versus the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) which has an estimated 10.4 billion barrels of oil.

In addition to the 20 million acres available for oil drilling in the NPR-A, there are 68 million acres onshore and offshore in the U.S. that are leased by oil companies and are fully open to drilling but not yet developed. These lands contain 81% of America's federal oil and gas reserves. If oil companies tapped these 68 million acres of leased land, they could generate an estimated 4.8 million barrels of oil a day and 44.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas each day.

If the 20 million acres in NPR-A were put into production, along with the 68 million acres of already-leased federal lands and water on the continental United States, domestic oil production could nearly double. To incentivize domestic production on those areas, H.R. 6515 also incorporates provisions of the 'Use It or Lose It' legislation, cosponsored by Arcuri, which requires oil companies to drill on the leases they already have or give them up and allow another company to drill.

Arcuri is also calling on the President to start releasing oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to increase the supply of oil and bring gas prices down immediately. Arcuri strongly supported legislation signed into law by the President to suspend shipments to the SPR. Previous Republican and Democratic presidents have released oil from the SPR when

economic conditions warranted.

Arcuri also discussed legislation he has cosponsored and supported to foster increased energy efficiency and invest in new alternative energy sources, such as the gas to energy generation at Seneca Meadows that can reduce energy costs for local families and create good-paying jobs.

“Renewable energy generation, as seen right here at Seneca Meadows, is critical to end our dependence on finite fossil fuels and build a green economy right here in Upstate New York,” **Arcuri said**

. “There is no silver bullet solution, but I know we can develop bold and far-sighted plans for a new energy future, plans that will finally end our dependence on foreign oil, preserve our environment, and create new, high-paying jobs.”

Arcuri was joined by representatives from Seneca Meadows, Inc who addressed the benefits of locally produced alternative energy, such as methane gas from the landfill which is used to produce electricity to heat local homes, reduce energy costs for area families and create local jobs.

Seneca Meadows, Inc. runs an 18 megawatt per hour (MW/hr) gas to energy facility which is fueled completely from landfill gas generated and collected from the Seneca Meadows landfill.

Landfill gas, a combination of methane, carbon dioxide and trace organics, is produced during the natural decomposition process of the waste. This gas is collected by a series of pipes and transported to the energy plant. The gas to energy plant produces enough power to continuously supply electricity for 15,000 to 18,000 homes and reduce greenhouse gas emissions equal to the amount of carbon dioxide produced by the consumption of 1,500,000 barrels of oil.

Included below is a complete list of legislative efforts supported by Arcuri to address our nation’s energy crisis:

U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri

Energy Accomplishments in the 110th Congress

Signed Into Law

(12/19/2007) Public Law 110-140 – Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 – Historic energy legislation with provisions to: increase Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards to 35 miles per gallon by 2020; create new building, appliance and lighting efficiency standards included in the new law will save consumers \$400 billion through 2030; and create an Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Worker Training Program to train a quality workforce for “green collar” jobs created by federal renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives.

(5/19/2008) Public Law 110-232 – Strategic Petroleum Reserve Fill Suspension and Consumer Protection Act of 2008 – to suspend the fill of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, starting June 30th and through the end of the year, as long as the price of crude oil remains above \$75 per barrel. This is a critical first step for hardworking families, businesses and the economy, which in the past has brought gas prices down. The President, who was previously opposed, suspended shipments and signed the bill because of overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress.

(6/18/2008) Public Law 11-261 – Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FARM Bill) – the new Farm Bill increases Commodity Futures Trading Commission oversight authority to detect and prevent manipulation of energy prices. The law also provides \$1.1 billion to fund programs that will help the renewable energy industry invest in new technologies that use a variety of sources beyond feed grains. This includes \$320 million in loan guarantees for biorefineries that produce advanced biofuels and a new program to encourage the production of new biomass for cellulosic ethanol and other energy production, helping producers learn how to harvest, store, and transport biomass to bioenergy facilities.

Voted For and House Passed (Awaiting Action in the Senate)

(2/8/07) H.R. 547 – The Advanced Fuels Infrastructure Research and Development Act – to direct the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement a program of research and development of materials to be added to biofuels to make them more compatible with existing infrastructure used to store and deliver petroleum-based fuels to the point of final sale.

(3/12/2007) H.R. 85 - Energy Technology Transfer Act to improve an existing Department of Energy grant program that is intended to encourage the use of energy efficiency through the transfer of information from the research sector to businesses and governments.

(5/22/2007) H.R. 2264 – No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act – to authorize the Justice Department to take legal action against OPEC state-controlled entities that participate in conspiracies to limit the supply, or fix the price, of oil.

(6/6/2007) H.R. 1716 - Green Energy Education Act - making funds available for the National Science Foundation (NSF) program to support graduate education related to research, development and commercial applications of energy technology and also NSF's curriculum development activities to improve undergraduate and graduate education in the design and construction of high-performance buildings.

(2/27/08) H.R. 5351 – Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act of 2008 - extending: (1) the Production Tax Credit (PTC), for electricity generated from renewable resources, through 2011; (2) the energy tax credit for solar energy and fuel cell property through 2016; (3) the tax credit for residential energy efficient property expenditures through 2014; (4) the tax credit for alternative fuel vehicle refueling property expenditures through 2010; (5) the tax credit for biodiesel and renewable diesel used as fuel through 2010; and (6) the tax deduction for energy efficient commercial buildings through 2013. The bill creates new tax credits for: (1) investment in new clean renewable energy bonds and qualified energy conservation bonds; and (2) the production of plug-in hybrid motor vehicles, cellulosic alcohol fuel, and electricity from marine and hydrokinetic renewable energy sources.

(5/20/2008) H.R. 6074 – Gas Price Relief for Consumers Act – to authorize the Justice Department to take legal action against OPEC state-controlled entities that participate in conspiracies to limit the supply, or fix the price, of oil. The bill also creates a new Department of Justice Petroleum Industry Antitrust Task Force to examine the existence and effects of price gouging in the sale of gasoline, anticompetitive price discrimination by petroleum refiners, unilateral actions to withhold supply in order to inflate the prices, and manipulation in futures markets.

(6/26/2008) H.R. 6377 – Energy Markets Emergency Act – to curb the excessive speculation in the energy futures markets which has dramatically contributed to increased gas prices by directing the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) to use all its authority, including its emergency powers, to immediately curb the role of excessive speculation in any contract market trading energy futures or swaps.

Voted for in the House (Did not Pass):

(7/17/2008) H.R. 6515 – Drill Responsibly in Leased Lands (DRILL) Act – to mandate that the Bush Administration conduct annual lease sales for five years to ensure that land in the NPR-A is more rapidly leased for oil and gas production. Incorporates provisions of the ‘Use It or Lose It’ legislation which requires oil companies to drill on the leases they already have or give them up and allow another company to drill. H.R. 6515 would also reinstate a ban on the foreign export of Alaskan oil.

(6/24/2008) H.R. 6346 – Federal Price Gouging Prevention Act – to impose criminal penalties of up to \$150 million on corporations and jail sentences of up to 10 years to crack down on wholesale and retail companies charging unconscionable and excessive prices. Penalties levied against these price gougers would go to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which is a block grant program under which the federal government gives states, territories, and tribes annual grants to operate home energy assistance programs for low-income households.

(6/26/2008) H.R. 6256 – Responsible Ownership of Public Lands Act – to prohibit oil companies from obtaining any more leases unless they can demonstrate that they are producing oil and gas, or are diligently developing the leases they already hold. Similar--and effective--rules already apply to coal companies. This would provide a strong incentive for oil companies to stop stockpiling these leases and begin using them.

(8/4/2007) Amendment to H.R. 3221 for a National Renewable Electricity Standard – to require electric suppliers, other than governmental entities and rural electric cooperatives, to provide 15 percent of their electricity using renewable energy resources by the year 2020.

Legislation Co-Sponsored by Rep. Arcuri:

H.R. 197 – a 5-year extension of the Production Tax Credit (PTC) – extending the tax credit for electricity produced from renewable energy facilities such as wind, closed-loop biomass, open-loop biomass, geothermal, small irrigation power, municipal solid waste (landfill gas and trash combustion) through 2014. The current PTC is set to expire January 1, 2009.

H.R. 969 – Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard – to require that retail sellers of electricity to use a minimum amount of electricity from renewable sources of energy, increasing annually to 20% of our overall electricity use by 2020.

H.R. 1300 – The PROGRESS Act – to establish a National Commission on Energy Security and Transition to New Fuels to make recommendations to Congress and the President for: (1) preserving the national energy security in the event of a terrorist attack or natural disaster; and (2) reducing U.S. dependence on foreign oil over a specified period. The bill would also create a grant program to provide assistance to retail and wholesale motor fuel dealers or other entities to install, replace, or convert motor fuel storage and dispensing infrastructure for use in the storage and dispensing of biobased fuels and require: (1) the production and distribution of biobased fuels (ethanol) and deployment of new engine technologies for fuel-flexible, hybrid, plug-in hybrid, and biodiesel vehicles; (2) greater use of alternative fuels in dual fueled vehicles operating in the federal fleet; and (3) the increase and expansion of employer-provided mass transit fringe benefits. It would also create a capital grant program for the rehabilitation, preservation, or improvement of railroad track owned by short-line railroads.

H.R. 670 – Dependence Reduction through Innovation in Vehicles Energy (DRIVE) Act – to enact various provisions related to increasing fuel efficiency of passenger vehicles, expanding transit and reducing vehicle miles traveled. It would also prescribe minimum annual quantities of renewable fuel from cellulosic biomass, require at least a 20% reduction in the federal fleets' petroleum consumption (including that at least 30% of federal vehicles required to be alternative fuel vehicles be flex-fuel hybrid or flex-fuel plug-in hybrid vehicles), and create a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle prize program.

H.R. 1506 – Fuel Economy Reform Act – would mandate a projected level of average fuel economy of at least 27.5 mpg for vehicles up to 10,000 pounds beginning in model year 2012, and increasing to 35 mpg by model year 2018 (similar provisions were incorporated into legislation that became Public Law 110-140).

H.R. 6251 – Responsible Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act – to assess an escalating fee on land that oil companies have leased but are not using for production or diligently developing by the third year of the lease. The revenue raised from these fees will go towards renewable energy and energy efficiency investments that will reduce dependence on oil, as well as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which is a block grant program under which the federal government gives states, territories, and tribes annual grants to operate home energy assistance programs for low-income households.

H.R. 6264 – The Consumer Oil Price Protection Act – to prohibit trading in crude oil, heating oil, gasoline, or diesel fuel derivatives on the over-the-counter commodities trading market by

anyone who was not an actual oil company or gasoline supplier (by restricting trading authority to only those actors with the “the capacity to accept physical delivery of the commodity”). This would eliminate unregulated futures trading by energy speculators that artificially drive up the price of oil and other energy commodities.

H.R. 4275 – Keeping Americans Warm Act – to provide an additional \$1 billion in contingency Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding. LIHEAP is a block grant program under which the federal government gives states, territories, and tribes annual grants to operate home energy assistance programs for low-income households. (\$569 million dollars in contingency LIHEAP funding was included in the Fiscal Year 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Act (Public Law 110-161).)

H.R. 1705 – BRIGHT Energy Savings Act of 2007 – to require that only energy efficient light fixtures or bulbs be used in Government buildings for all new construction or the replacement of any existing fixture or bulb (similar provisions were incorporated into legislation that became Public Law 110-140).

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