

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) voted with a bipartisan majority in the U.S House of Representatives yesterday for legislation he cosponsored which would halt shipments to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), increasing available domestic oil supply and helping to bring down local gas prices.

“Rising gas prices affect everything from family vacations to the cost of food in the grocery store, and we took decisive action to help local families struggling with escalating costs,” **Arcuri said**

“To increase domestic supply and bring gas prices down in the short-term, I proudly cosponsored this key legislation to halt shipments to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. With the Reserve nearly 97% full, there is no risk to our national security, only relief for local consumers.”

Monday evening, the U.S House of Representatives passed the Strategic Petroleum Reserve Fill Suspension and Consumer Protection Act (H.R. 6022) to suspend filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve through the end of the year, as long as the price of crude oil remains above \$75 per barrel.

Filling the SPR takes 70,000 barrels of oil off the market each day and a temporary suspension could reduce gas prices by 5 to 24 cents a gallon, which would be a critical first step to help local families, businesses, and the economy. The SPR has been tapped or suspended before by President Bush, President Clinton, and the first President Bush. In 2000, after such action, the price of oil dropped by one-third – from \$30 to \$20 per barrel.

Currently, the SPR is roughly 97 percent full – the highest level ever – with enough oil to meet national security needs. Today there is more in the SPR, than there was in 2006 (702 million barrels vs. 688 million).

Suspending shipments to the SPR has broad bipartisan support. 16 Senate Republicans have already sent a letter to the President calling for a suspension of deposits into the SPR. H.R. 6022 is supported by the American Truckers Association, Air Transport Association, Public Citizen, Sierra Club and the Center for American Progress.

Last year, Arcuri cosponsored The Energy Price Gouging Prevention Act (H.R. 1252), to provide relief to consumers by giving the Federal Trade Commission the authority to investigate and punish companies that artificially inflate the price of gas. Arcuri also strongly supported, and the U.S. House of Representatives passed, H.R. 2264 which would authorize the Justice Department to take legal action against OPEC state-controlled entities that conspire to limit the supply, or fix the price, of oil.

“Short-term relief for consumers is the first, step, but now is the time for a true commitment to building a long-term solution to our nation’s precarious dependence on fossil fuel – to keep us out of foreign conflicts, to preserve our environment and to create jobs and economic growth right here in Upstate New York,” **Arcuri said**. “The future for our children and grandchildren depends on our ability to act now.”

Since taking office, Arcuri has championed legislation that will invest in alternative energy technology to bring consumer costs down and grow our domestic economy.

The historic and bipartisan Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, signed into law at the end of last year, will increase vehicle fuel efficiency standards and help save American families \$700 to \$1,000 per year at the gas pump. New building, appliance and lighting efficiency standards included in the new law will save consumers \$400 billion through 2030. Additionally, the law invests in new “green collar” jobs through incentives and initiatives for American produced renewable energy.

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