

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

June 4, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

As I visited with my constituents over the Memorial Day District Work Period, each and every one of them seemed to have a single priority on their minds: the soaring cost of gasoline, diesel, and electricity. As you know, the national average for a gallon of gasoline is on the verge of reaching \$4 for the first time in history – and has risen by \$1.65 since the beginning of this Congress alone. Such a historic spike in fuel costs would be unwelcome news under any economic circumstances, but the fact that gas prices have surged during these sluggish economic times makes this crisis even more severe.

With this in mind, I write to you today regarding Select Committee on Energy Independence Chairman Ed Markey's (D-MA) introduction of his long-awaited legislation aimed at reducing the level of carbon in the air by imposing new taxes on emitting it. Based on his comments last week, Chairman Markey's legislation is expected to be much more far-reaching – and much more costly – than the legislation the Senate is debating this week. Make no mistake: House Republicans support responsible climate change policies that will protect our environment, advance our energy security, and create more American jobs. But in both cases, Chairman Markey's bill and the Senate bill amount to large tax increases that would impact virtually the entire economy and would saddle consumers with even higher energy costs. I believe this approach is not only inadvisable; it is reckless and inappropriate.

Nonetheless, I recognize your oft-stated desire to act on climate change legislation during the 110th Congress. The *Associated Press* reported on January 18, 2007 that you would bring the bill to the House floor by Independence Day of last year, and less than five months later, in a June 7, 2007 press conference, you reiterated, "The signal will be clear that Congress will act upon cap-and-trade legislation in this Congress." With your July 4, 2007 deadline come and gone, I trust that Chairman Markey's bill introduction this week will allow you to bring the measure to the House floor.

While I disagree fervently with the logic of raising energy costs while consumers already face astronomical prices for gasoline, I respect your prerogative as Speaker to follow through on your promise and schedule a vote on the bill. And frankly, I welcome the debate. At a time when families are reconsidering their summer travel plans because

of the record-high gas prices, I believe there is no clearer distinction between the two parties in Congress than on this issue.

House Republicans have proposed a comprehensive plan to promote alternative and renewable fuels, harness technologies already being employed successfully by our global competitors, and unlock America's natural energy resources through the exploration of oil and gas in an environmentally-responsible way – a reform backed by 57 percent of Americans, according to a Gallup poll released last week. And if Chairman Markey's legislation is any indication, the Democratic Majority plans to raise gas prices even further through more Washington mandates and higher energy taxes. The American people we serve here in Congress deserve to see these vastly different approaches debated vigorously on the House floor.

Therefore, Madame Speaker, I respectfully request that Chairman Markey's bill be scheduled for debate and a vote on the House floor as soon as possible. With no energy-related legislation slated for the next several weeks, I believe House consideration of this legislation prior to July 4, 2008 – fully one year after your initial target date for a vote – would be both feasible and reasonable. I look forward to your response and to working with you and Majority Leader Hoyer to ensure the debate on Chairman Markey's bill is given the time and attention it deserves during these truly unprecedented times for families and small businesses.

Sincerely,

John Boehner
Republican Leader