

Democrats' "Energy" Bills, 110th Congress

Actual Energy Produced

H.R. 2264 – No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act of 2007 (NOPEC)

Deeply offended that a group of energy-producing states would work collectively to protect market share and buoy world price, House Democrats decided the best way to confront these bullies is to call in their trial lawyer buddies – passing a bill that would extend US anti-trust laws to decidedly un-US nation-states abroad. How would the U.S. government go about enforcing such a law? Who knows – but Democrats haven't let those details get in the way of a good message – namely, that they're working hard to lower your gas prices.



H.R. 1252 -- The Energy Price Gouging Act

Despite an embarrassing paucity of real, proven cases of "price gouging," and existing federal antitrust laws that already forbid oil companies from colluding with competitors, Democrats thought it necessary to pass a bill requiring the Federal Trade Commission to conjure up its own definition of "price gouging," leaving the agency with no guidance on what to make of terms such as "unconscionably excessive" – but plenty of guidance on what kind of fines to levy: \$3 million per day, per apparent violation.



"Market Manipulation" Provisions in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007

Somewhere it must have been decided that the undefined regulatory burdens imposed on the FTC by the previous bill were simply not enough. But instead of introducing the same exact bill all over again, Democrats pasted the relevant provisions into the text of a larger fuel economy bill – reminding people, once again, that it remains illegal "to report false information on the wholesale price of gasoline." Missing from the bill, regrettably, was any mention of how to lower that wholesale price to begin with.



H.R. 5351 - Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act of 2008

Craftily tying an extension of several important energy tax credits to an effort to expropriate \$18 billion in new energy taxes, Democratic leaders gamely made the argument that the best way to slow down runaway gas prices and tamp down our dependence on foreign oil was to ... make it more difficult and expensive for American firms to produce American energy for American consumers. The result? Passage of a bill that produces no new energy – and worse, actually would have the effect of diminishing the energy production we already have.

