



United States House of Representatives

For Immediate Release

July 15, 2008

Republicans Take Action to Lower Gas Prices

WASHINGTON, DC - When filling up their tanks, most Americans might not know the gasoline they're pumping in one town might just be illegal to use a couple towns over. But they're certainly aware of how much that tank of gas costs, and they're likely to wonder what kind of personal sacrifices they'll have to make in order to pay for it.

One way to ensure that gallon of gas is cheaper for every American is to introduce some sanity to the mandates governing "boutique fuels," or individual fuel blend requirements each state - and sometimes, each county - imposes on its residents. Buying a gallon of gas should be as easy as buying a cup of coffee - black, no sugar. Instead, the process is more like trying to navigate the specialty drink menu at Starbucks.

The current gasoline supply stock used by U.S. motorists includes "boutique," or specially formulated fuels, which are required by law in certain communities. When supplies are limited, prices tend to rise quickly, substantially, and sometimes with very little prior notice. The more of these boutique fuels required, the more expensive the price at the pump is for everyday Americans.

House Republican Whip Roy Blunt (Mo.) introduced H.R. 2493, the Fuel Mandate Reduction Act of 2007, to help alleviate this troubling reality. Rep. Thelma Drake (Va.) will today file a discharge petition on that bill in an attempt to give this important legislation a vote on the House floor.

The Blunt legislation will lower the existing number of boutique fuels by requiring the Environmental Protection Agency to remove specific blends from the boutique fuel lists if the blend becomes obsolete or identical to an existing fuel. The Fuel Mandate Reduction Act also gives the EPA authority to waive fuel regulations should a serious supply disruption arise - similar to the presidential waiver following Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Boutique fuels are just like boutique shops along Fifth Avenue or Rodeo Drive and everything else boutique - overpriced. More than two years ago, the *USA Today* hit the nail on the head in an editorial saying boutique fuels are just like Starbucks coffee - unnecessarily complex and pricy. Americans might be willing to pay \$4 for a grande Arabian Mocha Sanani, but there's no reason to pay that for a gallon of gas.

Courtesy of the Office of the Republican Whip.