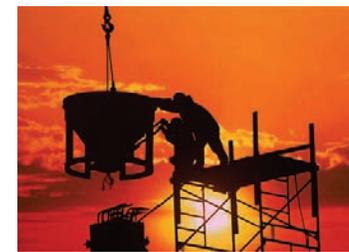


109th Congress

Securing America's Future



Memorial Day 2006 • State Work Period
<http://src.senate.gov>



SENATE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

Rick Santorum, Chairman

Kay Bailey Hutchison, Vice Chairman

<http://gop.senate.gov>



SENATE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

Rick Santorum, Chairman
Kay Bailey Hutchison, Vice Chairman



109th Congress

May 25, 2006

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for your commitment to work together to Secure America's Future. During the upcoming recess period we encourage you to highlight proactive Republican energy and conservation solutions, the continued strength of the growing economy, and the ongoing critical importance of securing our borders and fighting the war on terror as we honor the dedication and sacrifice of our troops and veterans over the Memorial Day Recess Period.

Republicans have made progress toward securing America's energy independence and affordable energy for consumers through the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which will have a positive impact over the next several years, and we are considering additional legislative proposals this year. Republicans have pushed for environmentally friendly domestic production for decades. The only sure way to reduce our dependence on foreign oil is to develop affordable and reliable domestic energy resources in an environmentally sensitive way, such as oil and gas exploration on the Coastal Plain of ANWR and offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. Republicans care about consumers and are working on energy security proposals to ease consumers' pain at the pump and secure America's energy independence from unstable sources of foreign oil.

Republicans also recognize the importance of promoting conservation and cleaner, more efficient technologies. America needs to diversify its energy supplies through expanded use of clean renewables and biofuels, clean coal technology, and nuclear energy. We are making progress through the 2005 Energy Policy Act and by funding the President's Advanced Energy Initiative.

Democrats' tough rhetoric on energy prices does not match their record. Democrats are trying to blame Republicans for a gas price crisis that Democrats helped create through decades of blocking sensible domestic energy supply and infrastructure development that would have stabilized supply. Democrats' primary energy plan is to block production, increase regulations and raise taxes, which increases consumers' prices. For example, if President Clinton hadn't vetoed legislation allowing environmentally sensitive exploration on the Coastal Plain of ANWR 10 years ago, today we would have 1 million additional barrels of oil a day coming from ANWR, which would mean lower gas prices for consumers and more energy security right now. In addition, there are an estimated 3.65 billion barrels of oil in the Gulf of Mexico, yet 70% of Senate Democrats are blocking environmentally friendly oil and gas exploration 100 miles off Florida's coast. At the same time, Cuba and other countries are working to start exploration only 50 miles off Florida's coast.

Please continue to communicate the vision of our Conference to build on our accomplishments through a positive agenda for American families.

Thank you.

Handwritten signature of Rick Santorum in blue ink.

Rick Santorum
Chairman

Handwritten signature of Kay Bailey Hutchison in blue ink.

Kay Bailey Hutchison
Vice-Chair

*Senate Republicans
are Committed to*



**Securing
America's
Future**

War on Terror

Securing America's Freedom, Homeland, and Borders

Jobs/Economy

*Securing America's Competitiveness and Creating
Jobs Through a Growing Economy*

Health Care

*Securing Affordable and Accessible Healthcare
for All Americans*

Energy and Conservation

Securing America's Energy Independence

Education

*Securing a Safe and Quality Education for
All Americans*

Energy



Gas Prices/Energy Message

Securing America's Energy Independence & Reducing Gas Prices



The current gas price problem is a global supply-demand problem, largely caused by geopolitical instability in Iran and Nigeria and increased demand in China and India. Other factors are continued post-Katrina recovery production disruptions and the convergence of federal clean-air fuel change requirements.

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For example, if President Clinton hadn't vetoed legislation allowing environmentally sensitive exploration on the Coastal Plain of ANWR 10 years ago, today we would have 1 million additional barrels of oil a day coming from ANWR, which would mean lower gas prices for consumers and more energy security right now. If we pass ANWR today, it will still have an immediate positive impact on prices because it will help stabilize trading markets.

In addition, there are an estimated 3.65 billion barrels of oil in the Gulf of Mexico, yet 70% of Senate Democrats are blocking environmentally friendly oil and gas exploration 100 miles off Florida's coast. At the same time, Cuba and other countries are working to start exploration only 50 miles off Florida's coast.

Senate Republican Energy and Conservation Working Group 2006 Gas Price Relief Proposals



Refinery Capacity

Encourages the construction of new and the expansion of existing refineries, biorefineries (ethanol, biodiesel), and coal-to-liquids facilities to meet the domestic motor fuels needs of today and tomorrow.

Domestic Oil and Gas Production

Opens an area in the Gulf of Mexico known as Lease Sale 181, which is estimated to contain 930 million barrels of oil and six trillion cubic feet of natural gas—enough to heat six million homes for the next 15 years.

Drilling on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Opens a portion of the Coastal Plain of ANWR for environmentally sensitive oil exploration and production to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. If President Clinton had not vetoed ANWR drilling legislation 10 years ago, today we would have 1 million barrels of oil a day coming from ANWR, which would mean lower gas prices.

Natural Gas Supply

Facilitates construction of an LNG facility that will reduce natural gas prices in the Northeast by up to 20 percent.

Tax Incentives

Expands tax incentives to increase refinery capacity, build new pipelines, bring more fuel to market faster and promote the use of hybrid vehicles, partially paid for by rolling back a tax incentive for big oil companies.

Advanced Energy Initiative

Encourages research and development into alternative fuels and advanced technology vehicles to diversify our domestic energy supply and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Boutique Fuels

Reduces the number of fuel types, making a more flexible and competitive fuel supply and distribution system to lower prices at the pump.

Fuel Economy Standards

Gives the Secretary of Transportation the authority to issue a rule governing fuel efficiency standards for passenger vehicles.

Alternative Energy Refueling Systems

Encourages gas station owners to install E-85, bio-diesel and other alternative energy refueling systems to increase the availability of alternative fuels for consumers.

Strategic Petroleum Reserve

Urges the Administration to suspend deposits into the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for six months to ensure our entire oil supply is available for consumer use.

Consumer Anti-Price Gouging Protection

Gives the Federal Trade Commission, as well as the Justice Department and state attorneys general, the authority to bring enforcement actions against any supplier unlawfully inflating the price of gas to protect consumers from abuse.

Majority Message



Senate Democrats Lack Credibility When It Comes To Affordable Energy

Disingenuous Democrats Play Politics With The High Gas Prices Their Obstruction Helped Create

The New York Times Notes Democrats “Did Little To Advance Energy Measures” When In Power. “While Democrats are eagerly laying blame for the situation on the Republicans, they did little to advance energy measures in eight years under President Bill Clinton.” (*Michael Janofsky, “Democrats Eager To Exploit Anger Over Gas Prices,” The New York Times, 4/21/06*)

For Four Years, Senate Democrats Blocked Consideration Of A Comprehensive Energy Policy For America. In 2001, the Democrat-controlled Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee failed to mark-up an energy bill; In 2002, Senate Democrats voted against an energy bill conference report, preventing Congress from considering a bill at all; In 2003, Senate Democrats filibustered that year’s energy bill conference report.

Thanks To Republican Efforts, A Comprehensive Energy Bill Finally Passed In 2005. The measure lays out a comprehensive approach to reducing energy costs and lessening our dependence on foreign sources of oil. Among other notable provisions, the energy bill:

- Eliminates the 2 percent “oxygenate requirement” for reformulated gasoline, to improve the flexibility of our fuel supply and reduce the number of “boutique fuels”
- Establishes a new Renewable Fuel Standard that requires the annual use of 7.5 billion gallons of ethanol and biodiesel in the nation’s fuel supply by 2012 – which would reduce oil consumption by 80,000 barrels a day by that time
- Offers income tax credits of \$250-\$3400 to individuals and businesses buying or leasing a new hybrid gas-electric, clean diesel or fuel cell vehicle – according to the US Fuel Cell Council, if just 20 percent of our cars used fuel cell technology, we could cut oil imports by 1.5 million barrels a day
- Requires a new, multi-year rulemaking by the Department of Transportation to increase fuel economy standards for passenger cars, light trucks, and SUVs
- Provides for a western states pilot program to streamline the permitting process to cut out months and years of unnecessary delays and bring oil to the market sooner
- Reduces our dependence on other nations by displacing 2 billion barrels of foreign oil with ethanol – because of the ethanol mandate, 34 new ethanol plants are under construction, 8 existing plants are being expanded and more than 150 plants are in the works
- Helps transform our fuel supply by providing fueling stations with the ability to claim a 30 percent credit for the cost of installing clean-fuel vehicle refueling equipment (e.g. E85 ethanol pumping stations)

Time And Time Again, Democrats Have Backed Foolhardy, Unrealistic Energy Policies That Keep Consumer Costs High

During Debate On The Tax Relief Act Of 2005, Democrats Voted To Make Domestic Energy Exploration And Development More Expensive. The deduction for intangible drilling and development costs has been available to oil companies for decades and is critical to the development of domestic sources of oil supply and production. Without it, many costly, high-potential domestic projects would be rejected in favor of lower-cost, foreign oil development projects. (*109th Congress, 1st Session, Vote 332, 11/17/05*)

Twice Last Year, Democrats Voted Against Environmentally-Sensitive Energy Development In The Coastal Plains Of Rural Alaska. Once developed, ANWR would provide approximately 1 million barrels of oil per day (approximately 5 percent of total American consumption) and save almost \$70 million a year on America's oil import bill. (*109th Congress, 1st Session, Vote 52, 3/16/05; 109th Congress, 1st Session, Vote 364, 12/21/05*)

Democrats Voted Against Even Taking An Inventory Of The Nation's Energy Resources Beneath The Outer Continental Shelf. Democrats voted to keep Congress and the American people in the dark about the location and volume of American energy supplies and current impediments to energy exploration and development. (*109th Congress, 1st Session, Vote 143, 6/21/05*)

Senate Democrats Voted To Expose Ethanol Manufacturers To Civil Lawsuits. Since the Energy Policy Act requires the use of a set and increasing amount of ethanol in the motor fuel supply, the Energy Policy Act created a "safe harbor" provision to ensure that farmers' compliance with that requirement would not be the basis of a lawsuit. Given the experience with MTBE, policymakers were concerned that the litigation risk associated with ethanol production mandates could undermine efforts to encourage farmers to produce renewable motor fuels. Following this course would increase ethanol mandates while, at the same time, allowing lawsuits to proceed against the farmers complying with those mandates. (*109th Congress, 1st Session, Vote 137, 6/14/05*)

Democrats On The Environment And Public Works Committee Killed A Bill To Expand Domestic Refining Capacity. The bill would have addressed the gasoline shortfall caused by Hurricane Katrina and helped keep future costs down by allowing governors to ask the Environmental Protection Agency to manage the process for approving all environmental permits necessary to construct and operate new refinery capacity. The bill would set deadlines of 360 days for a final decision on a permit application for a new refinery and 120 days for approving or rejecting a permit application for expanding an existing refinery. It also would gradually reduce the number of fuel blends required in some areas to maintain air quality.

- Democrats' Alternative: Place The E.P.A. In Charge Of Oil Refineries. Democrats on the Environment and Public Works Committee proposed an amendment that would have placed the Environmental Protection Agency in charge of designing, building and operating oil refineries at taxpayer expense.

Sens. Reid, Kennedy, Kerry, Boxer And Others Voted To Raise The Cost Of Gas By 7½ Cents Per Gallon In 1993. (*103rd Congress, 1st Session, Vote 40, 3/18/93; David Hilzenrath, "Transportation Fuels Tax Would Hit Individuals," The Washington Post, 6/9/93*)

That Energy Tax – Eagerly Supported By Senate Democrats – Would Have Cost Americans An Estimated \$71.5 Billion Over Five Years. "[A] close look at the proposed energy tax ... shows that it was not designed by the Administration to soak Big Oil, but to hit consumers. ... Congress estimates that the tax will raise \$71.5 billion over five years... As a result, anxious lawmakers know that the energy tax more than any other element of Clinton's program represents a repudiation of the President's campaign promise not to raise taxes on the middle class to pay for his agenda." (*James Risen, "Energy Tax Hits Consumer More Than Oil Firms, Los Angeles Times, 5/27/93*)

- Sen. Reid, In 1993: “Personally, Mr. President, I think that the Btu tax was a fine idea, even though some of my colleagues might disagree.” (*Sen. Harry Reid, Congressional Record, 7/16/93*)

One Study Showed The Democrats’ Energy Tax Could Have Cost 400,000 American Jobs And Reduced National GDP By Tens Of Billions Of Dollars. CNN’s LOU DOBBS: “[T]he President’s proposed energy tax could cost 400,000 jobs and a reduction in the Gross Domestic Product of more than \$70 billion over a period of five years – those numbers from a DRI/McGraw Hill study spearheaded by economist David Montgomery...” (*CNN’s “Moneyline,” 5/14/93*)

The Administration And Congressional Republicans Support Higher Funding For Alternative Energy Programs

Under The Bush Administration, The U.S. Has Spent Almost \$10 Billion To Develop Cleaner Energy Sources. “Keeping America competitive requires affordable energy. ... Since 2001, we have spent nearly \$10 billion to develop cleaner, cheaper, and more reliable alternative energy sources – and we are on the threshold of incredible advances.” (*President George W. Bush, State Of The Union, 1/31/06*)

Earlier This Year, President Bush Announced His “Advanced Energy Initiative” – A 22% Increase In Funding For Clean-Energy Research. “Bush has proposed a 22 percent increase in funding for the government’s clean-energy research. He has said he wants to focus on nuclear, solar and wind power as well as better batteries to power hybrid-electric autos and hydrogen-fueled cars.” (*“Kerry: America Must Bolster UN, ‘End The Empire Of Oil’ To Defeat Terrorism,” The Associated Press, 3/6/06*)

President Bush Is Targeting New Technologies “To Replace More Than 75 Percent” Of Middle East Oil Imports In Less Than Twenty Years. “Breakthroughs on ... new technologies will help us reach another great goal: to replace more than 75 percent of our oil imports from the Middle East by 2025. By applying the talent and technology of America, this country can dramatically improve our environment, move beyond a petroleum-based economy, and make our dependence on Middle Eastern oil a thing of the past.” (*President George W. Bush, State Of The Union Address, 1/31/06*)

The Bush Administration’s 2007 Budget Increases Funding For Alternative Energy Sources:

- Solar energy funding increased by 78%
- Hydrogen fuel technology funding increased by 25%
- Biomass and biomass refinery systems—to study refining ethanol in a more cost-efficient manner—increased by 78%
- Wind energy funding increased by 12.8%

Domestic Offshore Oil & Gas Exploration



S. 2253 is a bipartisan bill introduced by Sens. Domenici, Bingaman, Talent, Dorgan that directs the Department of the Interior to lease parts of the area on the Outer Continental Shelf commonly referred to as Lease Sale 181. It has 27 cosponsors.

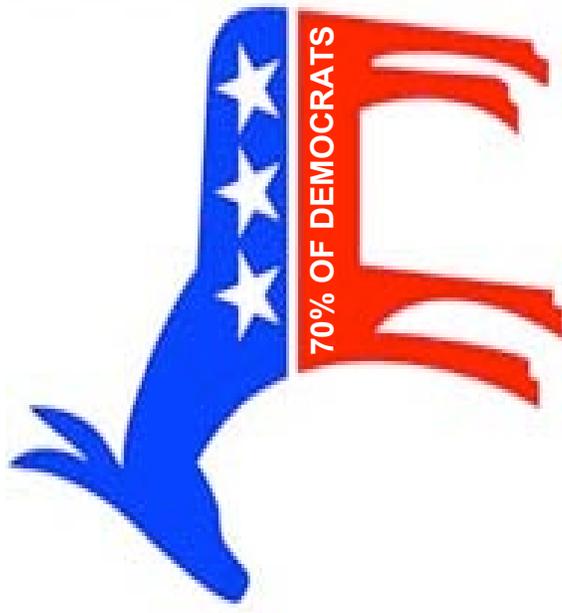
The bill facilitates oil and gas development on approximately 3 million acres of the OCS which holds an estimated 5 trillion cubic feet of gas and 800 million barrels of oil. (An additional 1 tcf of gas and 100 million barrels of oil is available in an additional .7 million acres but these resources are within a military mission area and can only be developed with permission from the Secretary of Defense.)

The bill does not allow any leasing within 100 miles of the Florida coastline and does not alter in any way existing executive or congressional moratoria. The bill protects all coastal viewsapes and respects all moratoria.

Developing oil and gas in this region in an environmentally-responsible way is one of the most significant steps Congress can take to increase our supplies of oil and natural gas in the near-term, stabilizing energy prices.

The oil and gas in this region is near existing pipelines and could be brought to market within a few years, stabilizing our soaring energy prices.

There Are 3.65 Billion Barrels of Oil Under Moratorium In The Gulf of Mexico.



Working to start exploration
50 miles off Florida's coast.

Working to block exploration
100 miles off Florida's coast.

He can drill, but we can't?

State Of The Union: The Advanced Energy Initiative



In His State Of The Union Address, President Bush Outlined The Advanced Energy Initiative To Help Break America's Dependence On Foreign Sources Of Energy. The President has set a national goal of replacing more than 75% of our oil imports from the Middle East by 2025. With America on the verge of breakthroughs in advanced energy technologies, the best way to break the addiction to foreign oil is through new technology. Since 2001, we have spent nearly \$10 billion to develop cleaner, cheaper, and more reliable alternative energy sources. Tonight, the President announced the Advanced Energy Initiative, which provides for a 22% increase in clean-energy research at the Department of Energy (DOE). The Initiative will accelerate our breakthroughs in two vital areas; how we power our homes and businesses; and how we power our automobiles.

Changing The Way We Power Our Homes And Businesses

The Administration Will Work To Diversify Energy Sources For American Homes And Businesses. Accelerating research in clean coal technologies, clean and safe nuclear energy, and revolutionary solar and wind technologies will reduce overall demand for natural gas and lead to lower energy costs. The President's Advanced Energy Initiative proposes speeding up research in three promising areas:

- **The President's Coal Research Initiative.** Coal provides more than half of the Nation's electricity supply, and America has enough coal to last more than 200 years. As part of the National Energy Policy, the President committed \$2 billion over 10 years to speed up research in the use of clean coal technologies to generate electricity while meeting environmental regulations at low cost. To tap the potential of America's enormous coal reserves, the President's 2007 Budget includes \$281 million for development of clean coal technologies, nearly completing the President's commitment 4 years ahead of schedule.
- **The President's 2007 Budget Includes \$54 Million For The FutureGen Initiative.** The FutureGen initiative is a partnership between government and the private sector to develop innovative technologies for an emissions-free coal plant that captures the carbon dioxide it produces and stores it in deep geologic formations.
- **The Global Nuclear Energy Partnership.** Nuclear power generates large amounts of low-cost electricity without emitting air pollution or greenhouse gases. The 2007 Budget includes \$250 million to launch a new Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, to develop and deploy innovative, advanced reactors and new methods to recycle spent nuclear fuel, in cooperation with nations that have advanced civilian nuclear energy programs, such as France, Japan, and Russia. This will allow us to produce more energy, while dramatically reducing the amount of nuclear waste and eliminating the nuclear byproducts that unstable regimes or terrorists could use to make weapons.
- **The President's Solar America Initiative.** The 2007 Budget will propose a new \$148 million Solar America Initiative – an increase of \$65 million over FY06 – to accelerate the development of semiconductor materials that convert sunlight directly to electricity. These solar photovoltaic "PV" cells can be used to deliver energy services to rural areas and can be incorporated directly into building materials, so that there can be future "zero energy" homes that produce more energy than they consume.
- **Expanding Clean Energy from Wind.** The 2007 Budget includes \$44 million for wind energy research – a \$5 million increase over FY06 levels. This will help improve the efficiency and lower the costs of new wind technologies for use in low-speed wind environments. Combined with ongoing efforts to expand access to Federal lands for wind energy development, this new funding will help dramatically increase the use of wind energy in the United States.

Changing The Way We Power Our Automobiles

We Are On The Verge Of Dramatic Improvements In How We Power Our Automobiles, And The President's Initiative Will Bring Those Improvements To The Forefront. The United States must move beyond a petroleum-based economy and develop new ways to power automobiles. The President wants to accelerate the development of domestic, renewable alternatives to gasoline and diesel fuels. The Administration will accelerate research in cutting-edge methods of producing "cellulosic ethanol" with the goal of making the use of such ethanol practical and competitive within 6 years. The Administration will also step up the Nation's research in better batteries for use in hybrid and electric cars and in pollution-free cars that run on hydrogen.

- **The Biorefinery Initiative.** To achieve greater use of "homegrown" renewable fuels in the United States, advanced technologies need to be perfected to make fuel ethanol from cellulosic (plant fiber) biomass, which is now discarded as waste. The President's 2007 Budget will include \$150 million – a \$59 million increase over FY06 – to help develop bio-based transportation fuels from agricultural waste products, such as wood chips, stalks, or switch grass. Research scientists say that accelerating research into "cellulosic ethanol" can make it cost-competitive by 2012, offering the potential to displace up to 30% of the Nation's current fuel use.
- **Developing More Efficient Vehicles.** Current hybrids on the road run on a battery developed at the DOE. The President's plan would accelerate research in the next generation of battery technology for hybrid vehicles and "plug-in hybrids." Current hybrids can only use the gasoline engine to charge the on-board battery. A "plug-in" hybrid can run either on electricity or on gasoline and can be plugged into the wall at night to recharge its batteries. These vehicles will enable drivers to meet most of their urban commuting needs with virtually no gasoline use. Advanced battery technologies offer the potential to significantly reduce oil consumption in the near-term. The 2007 Budget includes \$30 million – a \$6.7 million increase over FY06 – to speed up the development of this battery technology and extend the range of these vehicles.
- **The Hydrogen Fuel Initiative.** In his 2003 State of the Union address, President Bush announced a \$1.2 billion Hydrogen Fuel Initiative to develop technology for commercially viable hydrogen-powered fuel cells, which would power cars, trucks, homes, and businesses with no pollution or greenhouse gases. Through private-sector partnerships, the Initiative and related FreedomCAR programs will make it practical and cost-effective for Americans to use clean, hydrogen fuel cell vehicles by 2020. The President's 2007 Budget will provide \$289 million – an increase of \$53 million over FY06 – to accelerate the development of hydrogen fuel cells and affordable hydrogen-powered cars. Through the President's program, the cost of a hydrogen fuel cell has been cut by more than 50% in just four years.
- **America Must Act Now To Reduce Dependence On Foreign Sources Of Energy.** There are an estimated 250 million vehicles on America's highways, and Americans will purchase more than 17 million vehicles this year. It will take approximately 15 years to switch America's automobiles over to more fuel efficient technologies. The sooner breakthroughs are achieved, the better for America.

The President's Advanced Energy Initiative Will Build On The Progress Made Since 2001

Since 2001, The Administration Has Worked To Ensure Affordable, Reliable, Secure, And Clean Sources Of Energy. In 2001, the President put forward his National Energy Policy, which included over 100 recommendations to increase domestic energy supplies, encourage efficiency and conservation, invest in energy-related infrastructure, and develop alternative and renewable sources of energy. Over the past four years, the Administration has worked to implement these recommendations and improve the Nation's energy outlook.

Last Summer, The President Signed The First Comprehensive Energy Legislation In Over A Decade. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 is strengthening America's electrical infrastructure, reducing the country's dependence on foreign sources of energy, increasing conservation, and expanding the use of clean renewable energy.

Beating High Energy Prices

How to Beat High Gasoline Prices

- While gas prices seem to have spiked recently, the issues leading to this increase have been decades in the making. Our nation's refining capacity has been stagnant for thirty years, we have limited our options to increase domestic supply, and we depend more and more on foreign sources of oil that are becoming increasingly scarce because of rising demand in other countries like China and India.
- The energy bill signed by the president last summer has helped the U.S. start to turn the corner and lead us in the right direction. The energy bill supports development of more oil and gas reserves here at home and in addition, and will help us develop new technologies to fuel our transportation needs like hydrogen fuel cell cars.
- In the coming months, we may continue to see high prices due to increased demand as the summer driving season begins, the switch from winter to summer gasoline blends, and the phase-out of the gasoline additive MTBE in favor of ethanol.
- There are a number of things that American families can do to improve their fuel efficiency and help them save money. Taken together, these efficiencies can equal up to a dollar of savings per gallon.

Some of these steps include:

1. Slow down.

- Each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$0.15 per gallon for gas.
- Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gas.
- Equivalent Gasoline Savings: \$.12-\$.82/gallon

2. Keep your car maintained and running smoothly.

- Tune ups
- Clean air filters
- Tires properly inflated
- Proper grade of oil

3. Use your engine wisely.

- Avoid Excessive Idling
- Use Cruise Control and overdrive gears

4. Be smart about driving.

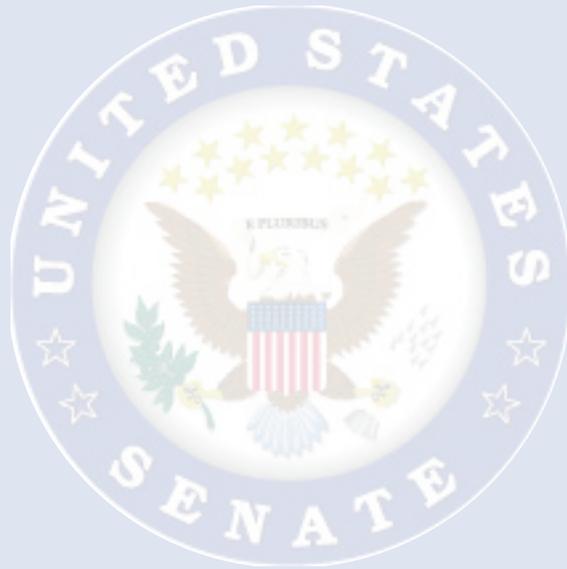
- Plan errands to do them together, rather than separate trips
- Carpool
- Mass transit
- Telecommute

5. Keep your car light.

- Too often cars become long-term storage facilities



War on Terror



Political Progress: Iraq Moving Towards Freedom And Democracy:

http://www.ieciraq.org/English/Frameset_english.htm

- On Saturday, May 20th, Iraq's Prime Minister Maliki announced a national unity government. He also stated he would name the Interior and Defense ministers, to complete the formation of his unity government, in the coming days. This unity government is committed to serving all of the people of Iraq.
- Members of the unity government understand that as they represent all Iraqis and not just narrow sectarian interests, they will be able to make a decisive break with the past and make a future of progress and opportunity for all of their people a reality. The unity government must now seize this moment and pursue a common agenda for the future.
- Prime Minister Maliki has already convened his Cabinet. He also laid out his plan for a new Iraq. He promised to work for a sovereign Iraq that will assume responsibility for the security of its people, and committed himself to a free Iraq that will uphold international standards of human rights and respect the role of women in Iraqi society. He pledged to work for a prosperous Iraq that welcomes foreign investments and accelerates reconstruction and lays the foundations for economic growth and opportunity. He declared he would lead a transparent Iraq, where government is open and accountable, and corruption is not tolerated. And he vowed to work for a peaceful Iraq that is the enemy of terror, a friend to its neighbors, and a reliable partner in the community of nations.
- This new constitutional government marks the end of a democratic transitional process in Iraq that has been both difficult and inspiring. This broadly representative unity government offers a new opportunity for progress in Iraq. It is a free government under a democratic constitution and its formation marks a victory for the cause of freedom in the Middle East. We have now reached a turning point in the struggle between freedom and terror.
- A free Iraq will be an important ally in the war on terror, will serve as a devastating defeat for the terrorists and al Qaeda, and will serve as an example for others in the region who desire to be free.
- In the last three years the Iraqi people have shed the oppression of Saddam's tyranny, and learned what democracy means – learned how to build common ground and come together in the interest of their nation. As the new Iraqi government grows in confidence and capability, America will play an increasingly supporting role.

Economic Progress: Iraq's Economy Is Growing:

<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/60857.htm>

- Iraq's economy is recovering after 30 years of dictatorship and lack of infrastructure maintenance.
- Under Saddam Hussein's regime, Iraqis' standard of living deteriorated rapidly. Iraq's per capita income had dropped from \$3,800 in 1980 (higher than Spain at the time) to \$715 in 2002 (lower than Angola).
- Today, economic recovery is picking up, with GDP growing from \$18.9 billion in 2002 to \$33.1 billion in 2005.
- Before liberation, Iraq's cities suffered from inadequate sewage systems. The U.S. has helped Iraqis build or repair sewage treatment plants for 5.1 million Iraqis. U.S. funded projects have improved access to clean water for 3.1 million people.

Security Progress: Iraqi Forces Are Growing In Size And Capability:

<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/iraqstatus/2006/c16536.htm>

- At the end of October 2005, there were 29 Iraqi Security Force battalions responsible for security in their areas. Today, the Iraqi Army now has 2 division headquarters, 16 brigades and 63 battalions responsible for security in their areas.
- On May 3, a state of the art command and control center, the first of its kind for the Iraqi Army, officially opened at the Iraqi Ground Forces Command Headquarters at Camp Victory. The Joint Operations Center is a significant milestone in increasing Iraqi command and control of their ground forces to process information and provide unprecedented situational awareness of Iraqi Army operations.
- Currently, about 35% of all operations in Iraq are independent ISF operations, only about 25% are CF operations, and the balance are combined operations.
- In October of 2004, there were no effective Iraqi Security Forces in Al Anbar Province. By March of 2005, there were 2,800 trained and equipped ISF in the province. Today, there are more than 19,000 ISF in Al Anbar – three of the seven brigades in Al Anbar are in the lead for security in their areas – and more are being recruited and trained.



May 21, 2006

President's Remarks on the Formation of a New Government in Iraq

Diplomatic Reception Room

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/05/20060521.html>

THE PRESIDENT: The formation of a unity government in Iraq is a new day for the millions of Iraqis who want to live in freedom. And the formation of the unity government in Iraq begins a new chapter in our relationship with Iraq.

This morning, I called the President, the Prime Minister and the Speaker to congratulate them on working together to form the unity government. I assured them that the United States will continue to assist the Iraqis in the formation of a free country, because I fully understand that a free Iraq will be an important ally in the war on terror, will serve as a devastating defeat for the terrorists and al Qaeda, and will serve as an example for others in the region who desire to be free.



May 21, 2006

President Congratulates Iraqis on Formation of New Unity Government

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/05/20060520-1.html>

I congratulate Prime Minister Maliki on the formation of Iraq's new unity government. Iraqis now have a fully constitutional government, marking the end of a democratic transitional process in Iraq that has been both difficult and inspiring. This broadly representative unity government offers a new opportunity for progress in Iraq.

The new government reflects Iraq's diversity and opens a new chapter in that country's history. Iraq's new leaders know the period ahead will be filled with great challenge. But they also know that they -- and their great country -- will not face them alone. The United States and freedom-loving nations around the world will stand with Iraq as it takes its place among the world's democracies and as an ally in the war on terror.

Today, as Iraqis look to their new government, they can be proud that in three years they have progressed from the oppression of a brutal dictator who fomented sectarian divides to an elected government in which all Iraqis have a voice. As Iraq's leaders work together to chart the future of their nation, bringing freedom and security to the Iraqi people, they make the world a safer place for all of us. The sacrifices of many of our country's noblest and bravest have helped make this day possible. We will not forget their contribution to our security and Iraq's democracy.

Secretary Of State Condoleezza Rice Discusses Iraq's New Unity Government

Secretary Rice On “Meet The Press”

Secretary Rice: Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki Is “Focused On The Right Things.” SECRETARY RICE: “... I talked this morning to Ambassador Khalilzad in Baghdad. He told me that already the Prime Minister has had meetings today on infrastructure security. He is saying that he’s determined to use maximum force if necessary to stop the terrorists and to, and to make certain that they can disarm militias and other unauthorized armed groups. So he’s focused on the right things, and this government, I think, has a really good chance to work, and work effectively.” (NBC’s “Meet The Press,” 5/21/06)

- **Secretary Rice:** Iraqi Forces Are “Stepping Up More To Take Their Security Responsibilities.” SECRETARY RICE: “We are going to sit with the new Iraqi Prime Minister and his team and look at the security situation, both in terms of what remains to be done and who should do it. When I was there, Prime Minister Maliki told me that he wanted to see an acceleration of even the training of Iraqi forces, and certainly Iraqi forces stepping up more to take their security responsibilities. They are stepping up. They’re taking large parts of territory that they now control. That notorious highway between the airport and the international zone is now controlled by Iraqis. And in fact, has been much more peaceful since they’ve taken control of it. So they are taking their responsibilities. They are taking losses on behalf of their own country.” (NBC’s “Meet The Press,” 5/21/06)
- **Secretary Rice:** “The Question Is, ‘Can We Succeed?’ And I Just Want To Say We Can.” SECRETARY RICE: “I understand that Americans see on their screens violence. They continue to see Americans killed, and we mourn every death. These are very hard things to do. But I would ask that people remember why we are there. We are there because we are trying to – having overthrown a brutal dictator who was a destabilizing force in the Middle East, we’re trying to help the Iraqis create a stable foundation for democracy and a stable foundation for peace. In a region in which our interests, and indeed our very security, has been so wrapped up with the Middle East, that is something worth doing. And nothing of value is ever won without sacrifice. I understand that it’s hard, it’s also hard – harder to see the quiet progress on the political front, the coming together of Iraqis, Sunnis, Shia, Kurds, to build their political future. And so I, I understand that Americans want us to succeed and that the question is, ‘Can we succeed?’ And I just want to say we can.” (NBC’s “Meet The Press,” 5/21/06)
- **Secretary Rice:** The Iraqis Have Come “A Long Way.” SECRETARY RICE: “We are a long way ... from the governing council that had a rotating president every month to the now inauguration of Prime Minister Maliki, the inauguration of an Iraqi government that is capable and competent and committed, and the inclusion of large numbers of Sunnis through authentic political leadership that we believe can give people a place in the political system and give less reason for a violent insurgency among the Sunnis.” (NBC’s “Meet The Press,” 5/21/06)

Secretary Rice On “Fox News Sunday”

Secretary Rice: Iraqi Leaders Showed “Determination And Maturity” In Shaping Their Government. SECRETARY RICE: “In fact, what you have is an Iraqi government that is now formed. Yes, they’re going to take a few days longer to get right the ministry of interior, the ministry of defense and the national security adviser. The Prime Minister has made very clear to us and to the people in the other parties that he wants to have people in whom he has supreme confidence because of the importance of this. I know, for instance, they were going through extensive interviews with people, extensive background checks with people because they want to make sure that they have it right. I think it’s quite obvious that when you take this kind of time, it shows a kind of determination and maturity.” (Fox’s “Fox News Sunday,” 5/21/06)

- **Secretary Rice:** Prime Minister Maliki “Wants To Accelerate The Pace ... By Which Iraqi Security Forces Take More Responsibility.” SECRETARY RICE: “Prime Minister Maliki has made clear that he actually wants to accelerate the pace not just of training of Iraqi security forces, but the pace by which Iraqi security forces take more responsibility. So over the next few weeks, General Casey will sit with the Iraqi government. They will come up with plans that include what remains to be done, what role Iraqi forces can play in that, what role coalition forces still need to play.” (Fox’s “Fox News Sunday,” 5/21/06)