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LARSON RESPONDS TO BUSH DRILLING BAN ANNOUNCEMENT

Washington, DC -- Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01), Vice Chair of the Democratic Caucus, responded today to President Bush's announcement that he would lift the ban on offshore drilling.

"What the President did today is nothing but an empty gesture that will do nothing to lower the price of oil. Now is not a time for gestures, it is a time for action. The American people are hurting under seven years of Bush energy policy. They need results.

"The President should do what Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the Democratic House leadership have called on him to do. He should release some oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPRO). Right now, President Bush is sitting on 700 million barrels of taxpayer's oil. Infusing just a small portion of that into the market will go a long way to lower gas prices now.

"Democrats are not opposed to drilling. We think the oil companies should drill on the 68 million acres of land that is available to them. Over 80% of the oil and gas resources on federal lands and the Outer Continental Shelf are currently open for development. Why aren't they drilling there?"

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