

## Larson Applauds Hearing into Spiraling Fuel Costs

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WASHINGTON , D.C. – Congressman John B. Larson, who has pushed for Congressional scrutiny into skyrocketing fuel prices, commended the House Energy and Commerce Committee for its swift action in scheduling hearings on this issue. Larson wrote to Barton (R-Texas) and Dingell (D-Michigan) on August 24, 2005, urging an investigation into the oil companies' role in escalating energy prices.

Wednesday's hearing will look into the impact of Hurricane Katrina on oil costs and distribution.

"I am gratified that Chairman Joe Barton and Ranking Member John D. Dingell have called for hearings into the precipitous increase in gas and oil prices," Larson said. "This is an important first step into Congress fulfilling its duty to protect our citizens and our economy, but we cannot stop here. Fuel costs rose at an alarming rate before the heartbreaking catastrophe of Hurricane Katrina. For all appearances and visible evidence, these unceasing spikes are the product of greed and manipulation, divorced from natural market forces.

"It is shameful enough if the oil companies and speculators have artificially jacked up prices to further gorge their already inflated gains. But to use the untold suffering and loss from one of the country's worst disasters as an excuse to continue pumping up profits is a disgrace that will not be tolerated. The American public is pleading for relief and we must provide it. These hearings have officially put them on notice."

In a follow-up letter to the Committee Tuesday praising the review, Larson stated:

"I believe that a larger effort is needed to rein in energy prices. My constituents and the people across the country are worried about making ends meet in the face of rising gas and home heating oil costs. I trust that once the hearing concludes tomorrow, the committee will turn to focusing on comprehensive way Congress can provide energy relief to the nation."

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