

Rep. John Larson: Enough!

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September 6th, 2008 by Karina

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Listen:

Full transcript:

Hi, I'm Congressman John Larson of East Hartford, Connecticut, Vice Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus.

In Denver, Barack Obama struck a chord with the American people when he spoke about the change we need now.

It is that fierce urgency of now that led John Mitchell, a former Republican Mayor in my district, to tell me about the plight of everyday citizens forced to turn over their entire Social Security check in order to heat their homes.

At Augie & Ray's in my hometown, I hear daily from commuters, truckers, small business owners, and people on fixed income. They tell me how the costs of oil and gas are impacting their life.

For eight years, two oilmen in the White House have crafted this country's energy policy. And for eight years, Big Oil has raked in unprecedented profits.

Barack Obama summed up our sentiment on this Bush-McCain policy, in one word: enough!

Enough of the energy policies designed behind closed doors with the oil industry.

Enough of John McCain and the Senate Republicans blocking tax credits for alternative energy.

Enough of the exorbitant cost to fill up our gas tanks.

And enough of choosing between prescription drugs, buying food, and heating our homes.

Enough!

It is time for an energy policy that puts Main Street before Wall Street.

It is time for a comprehensive energy plan that eases the short-term burden of high energy costs and addresses the long-term crisis of our dependence on Middle East oil.

Barack Obama has set a goal for this country. He's laid down a marker. Under his presidency, we will end our addiction to oil from the Middle East within ten years.

His challenge echo President Kennedy's goal to send a man to the moon. Well, we accomplished that in nine years.

And this new goal is within the grasp of the American people and the New Direction Congress is ready to embrace it.

Unfortunately, some Republicans in Congress – including John McCain – have spent the last few months obstructing progress and doing the bidding of the oil industry.

They offer nothing but the empty mantra of ‘drill, drill, drill.’

Democrats support drilling, but a ‘drill only’ plan would do nothing but drill deeper and deeper into your wallet. And look, while the oil companies have remained flush, your wallet is running dry.

When we return to Washington next week, the Democratic Congress under the leadership of Speaker Nancy Pelosi will put forward a comprehensive, bipartisan energy plan that puts us on the path toward reaching our energy goals.

We will vote on legislation that actually does something to lower the price you pay at the pump.

We will take speculators out of our energy futures markets where they artificially drive up the cost at the pump.

We will consider responsibly opening portions of the Outer Continental Shelf for drilling while demanding that Big Oil companies use the leases they have already been issued or return them to the public.

We will invest the royalties owed the American taxpayer in alternative energy technology.

And we will continue to call for the release of oil from our national stockpile to help lower the price at the pump. After all, if the President can release our reserves when the oil companies come asking – why can’t he do the same when the American people ask?

As oilman T. Boone Pickens says, we can’t drill our way out of this problem. Not when Americans use 25 percent of the world’s oil but only own three percent of the reserves.

Under the Bush Administration, we now import 70 percent of our oil at a cost of 700 billion dollars a year.

Enough!

We need to address our future energy needs with a federal renewable electricity standard consisting of alternative forms of energy, including natural gas, solar power, wind, biomass and geothermal power and fuel cells.

In short, everything must be on the table.

Democrats in Congress and Barack Obama believe that we need to put Americans first by putting them to work in a green economy.

With the strength and ingenuity of the American people, we can propel ourselves toward an energy independent future.

My fellow Americans, we can do this! And we must begin now!

I'm Congressman John Larson. Thank you for listening.

God Bless you and God Bless America.