

Rep. Roscoe Bartlett Supports Bipartisan Legislation to Require Half of all Cars to be Flex Fuel by 2012

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Congressman Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD) is a member of a bipartisan group of legislators, led by Congressman Eliot Engel (D-NY), who have introduced legislation to help break America's addiction to foreign oil. The Open Fuel Standard Act, H.R. 1476, would require half of all cars made or sold in America by 2012, and 80% by 2015, to be flexible fuel vehicles. These vehicles would be able to run on gasoline, or alcohol-based fuels such as methanol or ethanol, or a combination of both.

At Congressional hearings in December, Ford, General Motors and Chrysler committed to making 50 percent of their new cars flex fuel vehicles by 2012.

Reps. Engel and Bartlett are joined by Congressmen Bob Inglis (R-SC) and Steve Israel (D-NY) in creating the legislation, H.R. 1476.

Rep. Bartlett said, "What is certain is that we'll be facing a shortage of conventional oil for gasoline in future decades. What is uncertain is what alternative fuels will be available, where and at what price. With flex fuel cars that can use gasoline, ethanol or methanol, Americans will have the ability to break our personal dependence on imported oil."

Rep. Engel said, "Competition and consumer choice would end oil's monopoly in the transportation sector, strip it of its strategic status, and protect consumers from price gouging at the pump. We must take action as a nation to break our dependence on foreign oil and simultaneously aid efforts to halt the potentially harmful climate change affecting our planet."

"This will help to grow our economy and strengthen our national security by ending oil's monopoly at the pump," Rep. Inglis said. "We need to be able to tell the Middle East that we just don't need their oil any more and developing more flex-fuel vehicles is a sign America is getting serious."

"By requiring auto companies to convert their fleets to flex fuel vehicles, we are setting goals and a firm timeline for the auto industry to make good on their promises. In order to end big oil's stranglehold on our economy and transportation industry, we need to phase them out. This bill will give consumers the choices they deserve," said Rep. Steve Israel.

America must take serious steps to end the oil monopoly and enable the country to lower prices, protect our environment and enhance our national security. Alcohol fuels, including both ethanol and methanol; offer the potential for significant supplies of fuels

that can be produced in the United States, and in other Western Hemisphere countries friendly to the United States.

By increasing the number of vehicles that can run on alcohol, H.R. 1476 will play a major role in securing American energy independence. The technology already exists to build flex fuel vehicles at little or no additional cost. Flex fuel vehicles can use either conventional gasoline or alcohol fuels, or any combination of them.

The distribution system necessary for alcohol fuels will develop if a substantial amount of American vehicles are equipped for using them. The establishment of such a vehicle fleet and distribution system would provide a large market that would mobilize private resources to substantially advance the technology and expand the production of alcohol fuels, both in the United States and abroad.

A flexible fuel vehicle is a vehicle able to run on E85 – a fuel blend of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline by volume, and M85 - a fuel blend of 85 percent methanol and 15 percent gasoline, as well as gasoline.

Rep. Engel added, “I remain hopeful this legislation will be a part of a comprehensive energy measure in the coming months of the 111th Congress.”