

## Our country is still in need of a comprehensive energy policy

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As the energy crunch worsens across the country, we continue to urgently search for solutions to give Americans some relief. Today the House voted on H.R. 6525, the Drill Responsibly in Leased Lands (DRILL) Act, which would require the U.S. Department of the Interior to offer oil and gas lease sales on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska on an annual basis, over the next five years, instead of the current practice of conducting lease sales every two years.

Among other provisions, this legislation encourages completion of a new oil and gas pipeline to aid the transmission of supply, and it reinstates the ban on the export of Alaskan oil. Additionally, this bill included the "use it or lose it" bill, which failed to pass Congress two weeks ago and requires oil companies to "diligently develop" all of their current leases for energy production or relinquish the leases before they could obtain new leases. This measure failed under suspension, requiring 2/3 majority for passage, but if considered under regular order, requiring a simple majority, the measure would have passed. I believe that these provisions could have proven useful in achieving a greater supply of oil for the US market and furthermore, I believe that Congress should explore all potential solutions. My priority is promoting pragmatic solutions that cover a broader spectrum of energy policies, including intensifying development of alternatives, extending renewable and efficiency tax credits, implementing stronger efficiency standards, and encouraging more conservation -- especially before opening up our country's most sensitive areas to new drilling.