



# A Sample Op-Ed House GOP Solutions

House Republicans are at work, fighting for solutions that will lower historically high gas prices and reduce the unemployment rate, which remains over 8% nationally for the 37th month in a row. In contrast to President Obama and Washington Democrats, House Republicans believe that immediate steps can be taken to create jobs and set us on the path towards energy independence. An energy agenda that maximizes the domestic resources available to us is the most effective way to achieve these goals.

Since President Obama took office, average gas prices have risen 107% from \$1.84 per gallon to \$3.81 per gallon. In 2011, the typical U.S. household spent 8.4% of their income at the pump – compared to the previous decade, when this necessity accounted for only 5.7% of a household's income. In addition to the increasing strain this has placed on the American family, the effects of high energy prices have the potential to derail our nation's attempts at an economic recovery.

Current energy prices place tremendous stress on the engines of our country's economic growth: small businesses. As higher prices increase operating costs for all businesses, small businesses are especially negatively impacted. Small businesses are responsible for 65% of all new job creation in America. Moreover, they represent 99.7% of all employer firms in the U.S. and generate more than half of our country's nonfarm gross domestic product. We can't allow for our economy to suffer additional hardships due to the burden small businesses are facing when it comes to our national energy policy.

Unfortunately, in response to the pain American families and small businesses are facing, the President and Washington Democrats are more interested in advancing their political agenda than they are at providing relief at the pump. The President's energy agenda continues to exacerbate the economic uncertainty this country faces. It continues to cost American jobs and further our dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

In an act that completely undermines the effort to create jobs in America, the President personally lobbied Democratic members of the Senate to reject the most recent legislation that would give the Keystone XL pipeline a direction forward. It is insulting that the President is playing politics with the American people who are working to secure more prosperous opportunities for their families.

Republicans in the House of Representatives have passed six bills that would increase our domestic energy production and supply. Moreover, these bills would reduce the price of energy and grow our economy to create jobs. Our energy agenda, unlike the President's rhetoric, truly embraces all of our domestic resources that keeps America competitive in the global economy and makes us less reliant on unstable sources of energy.

Current energy prices pose a serious threat to the already fragile economic recovery. The American spirit has powered us through one of the roughest economic times in our country's history. We cannot merely rest on future claims of increased domestic energy production; we must accelerate towards full energy independence and maximum job growth. We owe it to future generations of Americans to continue to stand as a leader in the global economy, no longer subject to the whims of other oil producing nations, and that's why we'll continue fighting for an energy policy that will achieve these goals.

The [Associated Press](#) completed a statistical analysis of 36 years of gasoline prices and U.S. domestic oil production and found no correlation between the volume of oil produced and the price of gasoline at the pump. Experts agree. Douglas Holtz-Eakin, chief economist during the George W. Bush Administration, [stated](#) "domestic action to increase production will not lower gas prices set on a global market." Even the Cato Institute [concluded](#) that more U.S. production would create "more profit for domestic crude producers rather than significantly lower gasoline prices for Americans."

This snapshot ignores the fact that gasoline cost \$4.16 in July 2008 before plummeting along with the U.S. economy ([Source: EIA](#)). President Obama inherited artificially low gasoline prices because of the recession.

Even with higher gasoline prices, it is cheaper to drive a mile today than in 1980 due to increased vehicle efficiency. In 1980, costs-per-mile driven were \$0.23 per mile. In Feb. 2012, it was \$0.16-\$0.17 per mile ([Source: EIA](#)).

House Republicans are using rising gasoline prices as an excuse to push the oil industry's agenda. The [Gasoline Regulations Act](#), for example, would do nothing to lower prices but would delay air pollution reductions and gut the Clean Air Act requirement that pollution be cut to safe levels.

A [survey](#) of expert economists found that 88% agree that changes in U.S. gasoline prices over the last decade have been due primarily to market factors rather than U.S. federal economic or environmental policy.

The southern leg of the Keystone XL pipeline is [going forward](#) with the President's support. The northern leg is being re-routed to protect water supplies in Nebraska. The President will consider the application for the northern leg once TransCanada has chosen a route.

The United States imported just 45% of the petroleum it consumed last year, the lowest level since the mid-1990s ([Source: EIA](#)).

The Republican energy policy will not help consumers, but it will benefit oil companies. Even though the five largest oil companies [earned](#) \$137 billion in profits last year, Republicans [are fighting to protect](#) \$4 billion in yearly taxpayer subsidies for the oil industry.