



NEWS FROM

## Congressman Bobby L. Rush

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Opening Remarks by the Honorable Bobby L. Rush, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Energy and Power  
at the

Hearing: The American Energy Initiative: Challenges and  
Opportunities for Alternative Transportation Fuels and Vehicles

WASHINGTON — “Thank you for holding this hearing, Mr. Chairman, and thanks to all of our guests for being here today.

“Today’s hearing is timely, as prices at the pump climb to four dollars a gallon for regular gasoline.

“It is extremely important that this committee identifies short- and long-term strategies and objectives for developing alternative fuels for vehicles so five and ten years from now we won’t be having the same debates over rising gas prices due to unrest in the Middle East.

“For far too long now, we have been seeing widely fluctuating gas prices here in this country due to a lack of a comprehensive policy to move us away from imported oil and petroleum.

“And every year or two we’re back in the same exact place where we find ourselves today, discussing extremely high gas prices at the pump, but no closer to solving this issue, which has such a devastating effect on the budgets of low- and middle-income families, who must once again choose between putting food on the table or filling up their car in order to go to work.

“I look forward to today’s hearing to discuss both the opportunities and challenges we face as we attempt to transition to alternative fuels to power our cars and trucks.

“Americans love their cars and we love to drive, so it only makes sense that we provide direction for the American people and move our country away from its heavy dependence on foreign sources of oil.

“As a Representative from the corn-growing state of Illinois, I look forward to learning more about the impact that corn ethanol has had on the alternative fuel debate.

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“A few years ago, it was thought that relying solely on corn ethanol was a win-win alternative to diesel and petroleum fuels.

“Since that time, my office has met with several constituents and groups that have informed us of the impact of using corn ethanol for fuel, and its subsequent effect on increased prices for feed stock and the overall food supply.

“So I am very interested to hear from the experts here, today, on not only the impact of corn ethanol, but also the opportunities for additional alternative fuel sources for transportation including bio-fuels, electricity, natural gas, coal-to-liquids and others.

“I believe if we are prudent and we work together, on both sides of the aisle, we can develop a policy for alternative fuel production that would be to the benefit of all of our constituents and the American people as a whole.

“Mr. Chairman, I sincerely hope that this can be an issue that we can find common ground on and we can work together on for the good of the country.

“If we are willing to provide direction and funding to develop alternative fuel supplies, we can provide economical and practical benefits to Americans by decreasing the amount of oil we import while also, eventually, decreasing the price our families pay at the pump.

“However, we all understand that before we are able to enjoy the benefits that would ultimately come from alternative fuels, we must first invest in the research and development of these supplies.

“And even if we are able to come together on a comprehensive policy to develop these fuels, we must also invest in the infrastructure to support these fuels as well.

“So we have our work cut out for us, and I am pleased that today we take a first step in understanding where we are and what we need to do to move forward.

“I look forward to learning more on this issue from our esteemed witnesses, and with that I yield back the balance of my time.”

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