

Gas Pains


We have watched gas prices rise over a two year period from \$2.00 to over \$4.00 per gallon. We have also watched our President and Congress do absolutely nothing to try to curb the escalating price of fuel in this country.

Our leaders, in this an election cycle, have used the issue of gas prices to point fingers at one another to score political points. The Democrats will not allow drilling in areas deemed environmentally sensitive but would rather we develop more renewable sources of energy, unless of course it's a wind farms off the coast of Cape Cod. God forbid the Kennedy clan sees wind turbines from their beach houses. The Republicans on the other hand want drilling everywhere and to enrich farmers by converting corn into ethanol to be used as a gas filler.

The blame game is in full throat, the oil companies are gouging us making excessive profits, the auto makers made us buy big gas guzzlers, OPEC is deliberately reducing production to bankrupt the US, the commodities traders are gambling with the oil futures prices causing us to pay more than we should, etc, etc... There probably is some truth to all these accusations, however, we, the US have done very little to protect ourselves from these conditions.

What we need is leadership, solutions, and a change in the way we consume these resources. Here are my suggestions:

- 1- The President, whether or not you like him, should address the nation and use his authority by way of Executive Order and open up drilling in Anwar and off our coast. Whether it takes 10 months or 10 years to see the benefits of this drilling doesn't matter. Ten years from now we will still need oil and if we don't we can cap those fields. This act alone could cause oil speculators to rethink their oil futures investments and as a result oil prices could retreat quickly.
- 2- We must mandate higher fuel standards for our cars and trucks and continue to push for alternative methods of fueling our auto and we must continue to develop wind, hydro, and solar power sources.
- 3- We need to drive less. If we do we get to punish the oil giants, we get to shrink their profits and by doing this the price of gas will drop.
- 4- Again by Presidential Executive Order we must mandate more nuclear generation of electricity and increase the refining capacity of gas in THIS country. Europe has shown that nuclear energy can be developed safely, why can't we do the same?
- 5- Brazil has become completely oil independent by developing E85 fuel. All their cars run on it and they grow all the sugar cane necessary to produce this fuel. If Brazil can do it so can we. The corn (ethanol) craze has had an adverse effect on our food prices, so, in order to facilitate the E85 alcohol fuel all federal subsidies for farmers not to grow crops must stop.
- 6- For more immediate help the federal tax on gas which not stands at 18.4 cents a gallon could be dropped to 10 cents, and the state tax, which in PA is the third highest in the nation, could be reduced as well from the current 31.1 cents a gallon to 20 cents per gallon. These taxes could be reinstated when we begin to see the benefits of the other measures.



7- Lastly, we all know that the politicians in Washington and our state capitals are bought and paid for by big business and big oil. Come January 2009 we will have a new President, we need a new congress as well, so I urge you to vote against all incumbents and to continue that practice in local elections as well.

We have the power to the implement the changes necessary to improve our future and the future for our children. Do not surrender your power, vote!

Some of the solutions mentioned above will take time, money and sacrifice, we can do it, we are the most innovative, productive, and determined people on the planet. We will survive this and be stronger for it.

John DiPrimio

Citizens for Common Sense

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