

Michaud Pushes Consideration of Provision to Help Truckers Save on Fuel

Thursday, June 12 2008

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, Congressman Mike Michaud wrote a letter to congressional and committee leaders urging them to support an important provision included in H.R.6049, the Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act of 2008, also known as the Tax Extenders Act.

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, Congressman Mike Michaud wrote a letter to congressional and committee leaders urging them to support an important provision included in H.R.6049, the Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act of 2008, also known as the Tax Extenders Act. The provision that Michaud is pushing would exempt idling reduction units or auxiliary power units from the tax on heavy trucks and components.

"Truckers have been facing ever increasing diesel costs, now approaching \$5 dollars a gallon," said Michaud. "The forward-looking tax exemption provided in this bill would help to control some of these costs. I am disappointed that the Senate has failed to move this important bill, but I am hopeful that we can get something done this year. Every little bit helps, and truckers need this provision to pass so that they can stay in business."

Idling reduction units are designed to provide heat, air conditioning, and electricity while a vehicle is temporarily parked or remains stationary from a source other than the operation of the main drive engine. These units allow for a significant reduction in fuel usage while a truck is stationary, saving money for truckers and reducing emissions.

Such an exemption complements recent actions taken by Governor Baldacci to offer low-cost loans to trucking and other businesses for investments in energy-saving equipment.

"Overall, the Tax Extenders Act provides needed extensions and expansions of tax incentives for renewable energy," said Michaud. "Passage of this bill will retain and create hundreds of thousands of green jobs and spur American innovation and business investment."

In addition to advocating for this important tax provision, Michaud has been a strong advocate for further cracking down on off-market oil speculators who are artificially running up the cost of oil. Michaud is also leading efforts in Congress to increase the federal weight

limit to 100,000 pounds across the entirety of Maine's Interstate Highway System. Currently, the heaviest trucks must divert off the Interstate highways onto state roads. This increases the cost of shipping Maine products to market, makes trucks burn more fuel and carry less freight, increases the likelihood of accidents, and ultimately puts us at a competitive disadvantage to neighboring states like New Hampshire who currently enjoy higher truck weight limits on their Interstate.