

## Michaud Calls for Bipartisanship and Compromise in Finding Energy Solutions

Tuesday, August 19 2008

LEWISTON, ME

- Today, Congressman Mike Michaud sent a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH) urging cooperation and bipartisanship in the upcoming debate on energy that is expected when Congress reconvenes in early September.

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- Today, Congressman Mike Michaud sent a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH) urging cooperation and bipartisanship in the upcoming debate on energy that is expected when Congress reconvenes in early September.

"I encourage both of you, as leaders of your parties, to come to the table as honest brokers to consider the many proposals brought forward by Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, and to deliver real solutions for the American people," Michaud's letter stated. "Working together is the only way to move forward and the American people deserve nothing less."

In his letter to the House leaders, Michaud called for a compromise on increasing domestic production in order to break the current deadlock. He also outlined a number of things that he would like see included in an energy package, including increased funding for programs that would directly help Americans with high fuel prices and ways to help curb our continued dependence on foreign oil.

"One of the most contentious debates has surrounded the issue of domestic production. Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have differences when it comes to the details, but clearly we must move forward to find consensus. It is important that we reach a compromise. It's long past time that exaggerated rhetoric is replaced with action so that we can responsibly plan for our energy future," stated Michaud in his letter.

The full text of Michaud's letter can be found below.

\* \* \*

August 19, 2008

Honorable John A. Boehner

Speaker of the House of Representatives

House Minority Leader

H232, The Capitol  
Longworth House Office  
Building

1011

Washington, DC  
20515

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Boehner:

I'm writing to call on both of you, as leaders of the Democratic and Republican parties, to work together to ensure that when the House of Representatives reconvenes that real progress is made on the issue of high fuel prices. With prices substantially higher than last year, many Maine families are having a tough time filling their gas tanks and are concerned about this winter's upcoming heating season.

Because the current administration and administrations of the past have failed to provide our country with a coherent and effective national energy policy, we find ourselves in a costly and difficult situation. There are many entrenched interests in Washington fighting reform, but we need to stand strong. Now more than ever, Republicans and Democrats need to come together to do what is right for the American people.

Some important steps have been taken, and I appreciate the positive roles you played. We passed legislation to suspend shipments to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to help increase supply. Congress has also passed a law which sets out new fuel economy, building and appliance efficiency standards. And we have started to close the so-called "Enron Loophole," which allows energy speculators to run up the price of oil with little or no oversight. However, despite these positive efforts, partisan bickering and grandstanding have prevented broader solutions from coming forward. The American people deserve a comprehensive energy policy.

As we move forward, it is important to consider all proposals

that have been put on the table. One of the most contentious debates has surrounded the issue of domestic production. Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle have differences when it comes to the details, but clearly we must move forward to find consensus. Some have called for legislation that opens some new areas for drilling and which forces oil companies to drill on lands and waters already at their disposal, while others have simply called for a rollback of the moratorium on offshore drilling.

It is important that we reach a compromise. I recognize that expanded domestic drilling, done in an environmentally-sensitive manner and which protects the American people's investment in their public lands, could be a part of that compromise. In addition, states like Maine that depend on fishing and tourism as an important part of their economy must have a say in what happens off their coasts.

Regardless of what specific piece of legislation is brought up, it is important that policymakers be honest with the American people about how additional drilling would affect prices today. According to the administration's own Department of Energy, if we repeal the moratorium on offshore drilling today, oil and gas production would not begin there until 2017, and the impact on prices before 2030 would be "insignificant." A dose of honesty in Washington is sorely needed. It's long past time that exaggerated rhetoric is replaced with action so that we can responsibly plan for our energy future.

In addition to responsibly increasing domestic energy production, there are other items that I would encourage you to consider for inclusion in any compromise legislation. These include incentives for energy efficiency technologies and renewable power resource development, including wind, tidal, and cellulosic ethanol. In order to provide relief to Americans today, I strongly support substantial increases in funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Weatherization Assistance Program. I also believe that we should consider releasing oil currently in the SPR to lower prices immediately. We must also break the stalemate on taking additional steps to eliminate manipulation and runaway speculation in the energy markets.

I have introduced and cosponsored a number of bills which will help Maine's homeowners and small businesses deal with the challenges of high fuel prices, including a bill that would allow small businesses to apply for disaster loans in the face of high fuel prices. I encourage both of you, as leaders of your parties, to come to the table as honest brokers to consider the many proposals brought forward by Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, and to deliver real solutions for the American people. Working together is the only way to move forward and the American people deserve nothing less.

With warmest regards,

Michael H. Michaud

Member of Congress