

Energy

Mainers

have been hurt by the dramatic increase in fuel prices at the pump and many are having difficulty heating their homes. On top of a faltering economy, the high price of energy has made it difficult for Mainers to balance family budgets and for small businesses to stay afloat.

Congressman

Michaud has advocated for targeted relief to help Mainers deal with the increased price of fuel, and has continued to fight for the domestic production and renewable fuels that will help our nation to become more energy independent in the future while at the same time developing jobs here at home.

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- Office of the Governor - Energy

Promoting Biomass to
Help Boost Maine's Economy

In the 110th Congress, Mike introduced legislation that would help reduce energy costs and support the transition to greener power among struggling industries nationwide, including Maine's paper industry. He will reintroduce the bill in the 111th Congress.

Under the current tax code, biomass energy producers who sell their power into the grid can take a tax credit for the production of this green energy. However, biomass energy producers who use that energy on-site, like many of Maine's paper mills, are not allowed to take that tax credit. The legislation that Mike introduced would rectify this situation by extending the tax credit to all who produce biomass energy, whether the power is used on-site or off-site. This will promote the conversion of many plants from costly and environmentally-unfriendly petroleum fuels to locally-produced, greener biofuels.

Mike worked with local and national forest products representatives as well as the State of Maine in crafting this legislation. To read the text of the legislation, click [HERE](#) .

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Relief

For many Mainers, the high cost of fuel is overwhelming. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps by providing direct fuel assistance and supporting weatherization of homes for lower-income Mainers, including families, the disabled, and elderly living on fixed incomes. Mike has consistently called for substantial increases in funding for LIHEAP, and in the second session of the 110th Congress funding for the program was increased by \$2.5 billion to its fully authorized level of \$5.1 billion.

Mike has fought hard to suspend shipments to and release oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR). He has also pushed for releasing fuel from the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve during New England's heating season. In the 110th Congress, Mike voted for H.R. 6578, the Consumer Energy Supply Act, which would have released 70 million barrels of oil from the SPR allowing this supply to be brought to market.

Mike also

supports tax credits for working families and assistance to our small businesses to help them pay for energy. In the 110th Congress, Mike introduced H.R. 6429, the Small Business Energy Emergency Relief Act of 2008, which would make low-interest loans available to small businesses that have suffered or will likely suffer substantial economic injury as a result of the price of heating fuel. And Mike cosponsored H.R. 6605, the Home Heating Fuels Cost Relief Act of 2008, to provide a tax credit to individuals for home heating.

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Domestic Production and Renewables

In order to

protect our economy and national security we must reduce our dependence on foreign oil by increasing domestic production and investing in renewable energy. Mike supports the increased use of energy resources and fuels produced in the United States.

In the 110th

Congress, Mike voted for H.R. 6515, the Drill Responsibly in Leased Lands (DRILL) Act of 2008, which would have encouraged oil production in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, supported the construction of a natural gas pipeline from Alaska to the continental United States, and required oil companies to drill for oil in areas which they already hold leases. He also supported H.R. 6899, the Comprehensive American Energy Security and Consumer Protection Act, which would also have opened portions of the outer continental shelf to drilling. At the end of the 110th Congress, H.R. 2638, which removed the legislative moratorium on drilling, passed into law.

Mike also

cosponsored a number of bills to invest in renewable sources of energy, many of which are being produced in Maine today. He has voted for the extension of the production tax credit for renewable fuels like wind, tidal, and cellulosic ethanol. He also cosponsored and voted for H.R. 1772, the Rural Wind Energy Development Act, which would provide tax credit to homeowners to help them afford small wind systems, as well as H.R. 2990, which would do the same for homeowners installing geothermal heat pump systems in their homes. H.R.1424, which extended a number of renewable energy programs was passed by the 110th Congress and signed into law.

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Efficiency

One of America's great untapped energy resources is efficiency. Individual homeowners and businesses can take steps now to reduce their energy usage, but the federal government can help homeowners and businesses invest in technologies that reduce their energy usage. In the 110th Congress, Mike voted for H.R. 6, Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, which became law and included a number of provisions requiring increases in the energy efficiency of appliances, buildings, and vehicles. He also cosponsored legislation which would provide our schools with grants to make energy efficiency improvements. Such support would allow them to decrease their energy costs and reduce their fuel usage.

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