

America Must Become Energy Independent



As you fill the tank listening to the tick, tick of the gas pump, does your face tic with agitation? You're not alone: Gas prices push people's buttons.

Today, we drivers pour out their wallets to fill a tank of gas; some of us must choose whether to fill the fridge or the tank. People opt for more fuel efficient vehicles, drive less, or car pool to save gas money. We all fill up. Then, we do it again. And again. And again.

With gas at \$4 per gallon, roughly two cars per household, and average annual gas usage of 700 gallons, we Americans fight the feeling of stolen freedom. Why must we forgo our ability to travel?

Clearly, high gas prices are causing very real and hard-hitting problems. After months of bearing the burden of high gas prices, Americans are desperate for lower prices. But, how can the United States solve the high gas problem?

Interestingly, the United States remains at the mercy of oil companies, cartels and OPEC. Due to environmental protection, the federal government has made it impossible for states and citizens to benefit from energy relief from our own land.

"Why?" wins the popularity contest for questions today. Following suit, let's ask the question regarding the following:

- America contains more oil in the shale of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming than in the Middle East (800 billion barrels)! Yet statesmen/stateswomen, in the name of old-fashioned environmentalism, have made it illegal to touch it. (The land could be accessed without as much damage thanks to today's technology.) Why?
- In spite of today's improved, environment-safe tools, it remains illegal to drill for oil in northern Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge or off the coasts of Florida or California. Why?
- It's illegal to explore the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans for oil. Why? While China, Venezuela and Cuba receive leases to drill in the Gulf of Mexico, the United States is empty-handed. Why?
- America has not built an oil refinery in over thirty years. In fact, the number of American oil refineries has reduced by fifty percent. Why?
- The United States has the largest supply of coal in the world. Instead of America, Germany is the country planning to build twenty-seven coal-fired power plants by 2020. Shockingly, there is enough natural gas available in America (406 trillion cubic feet) to heat every home in America for the next 150 years!. But, it is currently illegal to access our own oil! President Bill Clinton once said, "We just have to

slow down our economy and cut back our greenhouse gas emissions 'cause we have to save the planet for our grandchildren." That type of mentality is the root of America's energy crisis. While our government is saving the planet, it is killing our economy. And, if the economy folds, there won't be any grandchildren who care about the environment. Why?

All Americans would likely ask, "Congress, could you use less time campaigning and more time reigning in the oil crises?"

Let's reduce our dependency on foreign oil, open up temporary energy production avenues for economic relief, and focus more on developing alternative energy (coal, natural gas, hydrogen, solar, nuclear, wind, etc.).

There is no justifiable reason for the United States to be dependent on foreign fuels. Without a doubt, it is time to drill in the United States. It is time to drill now! Now, we at *Unite the USA* ask, "Why not?"

- **Why not** add our local Congressmen and Congresswomen to our address books and contact them in a kind tone?
- **Why not** add the gas price issue to our prayer list?
- **Why not** write and e-mail the editors of local newspapers?
- **Why not** recruit our friends (i.e. on Facebook) to do likewise?

The next time you hear the tick, tick of the gas pump, remember to click, click your mouse and take action. Let the fuel crisis fuel your passion for justice. **Why not?**