

Congressman Bart Gordon
Floor Statement
H.R. 6203 - the Alternative Energy Research and Development Act

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6203.

This bill is very similar to Mrs. Biggert's HR 5656 which the Science Committee passed favorably in June.

We support the changes that were made and believe they address some of the concerns our members had with H.R. 5656.

The original bill contained a number of important provisions from Democratic members, and I thank Chairwoman Biggert for working with us to include them in this most recent version.

I am especially pleased to see my bill, H.R. 5658, included as Section 15 of this bill.

If our country is serious about reducing our dependence on foreign oil, we need to get serious about mobilizing the infrastructure necessary to distribute and dispense the next generation of fuels.

The bill instructs the Department of Energy and the National Institute of Standards and Technology to research fuel additives and other technologies that could make bio-based fuels more compatible with the country's petroleum-based infrastructure.

My bill, contained in section 15, also addresses potential challenges as fuel suppliers transition to Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel; a fuel significantly cleaner than traditional diesel.

This section instructs the Department of Energy and NIST to develop portable, low-cost, and accurate methods suppliers can use to test sulfur content in fuels.

It should be noted that in no way is this meant to interfere with the authority or activities of the Environmental Protection Agency to continue the successful transition to ultra-low sulfur diesel or other fuels programs.

It is intended to assist companies that are complying with EPA's programs, and I encourage DOE and NIST to coordinate these activities with EPA.

While I support Mrs. Biggert's bill, I personally believe the Committee should be sending a stronger message regarding the future of high-risk, high-payoff energy R&D.

Specifically, we should move towards the establishment of an Advanced Research Projects Agency for Energy, or ARPA-E, as directed in my bill, H.R. 4435.

There is a need for an organization capable of finding and promoting research breakthroughs, and converting those findings into potentially transformational energy technologies that will make this country more energy self-sufficient.

Mr. Speaker, all in all I believe this is a good bill with some strong energy research programs and I urge its adoption.

Thank you.