



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

ALCEE L. HASTINGS  
20TH DISTRICT  
FLORIDA

January 6, 2015

The Honorable Ernest Moniz  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Moniz:

The Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) plays a critical role in our country's energy policy. Recent releases from the reserve coupled with the volatility of the global marketplace means that having a stable, reliable fuel reserve is vital for our nation's energy independence and security.

It is my understanding that while the 2005 Energy Policy Act authorized an increase in the SPR's capacity to 1 billion barrels of crude oil, to date the SPR is still only physically capable of holding 727 million barrels and will remain at that capacity. Currently the SPR contains only 687 million barrels due to both a drawdown in response to the Libyan oil curtailment of 2011 and a recent Department of Energy test sale.

At the same time, crude oil prices over the last weeks have fallen as much as 28 percent to five-year lows and are predicted to remain low in the coming year.

With relatively inexpensive crude oil, funding available as a result of recent sales, and available SPR capacity, it appears to be an opportune time to ensure that the SPR is filled to its maximum capacity. Furthermore, what, if anything, prevents the Department of Energy from purchasing the crude oil to do so? As you know, the Energy Policy Conservation Act provides that the Secretary may place in storage petroleum products to minimize the nation's vulnerability to a severe energy supply interruption. To my knowledge, the 30 million barrels released following the Libyan crude oil curtailment was never replenished, nor was the approximately 5 million barrels sold in the latest test sale.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration of this correspondence. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress