



“We have a serious problem. America is addicted to oil.” President George W. Bush, 2006 State of the Union

The President is right. America’s appetite for crude oil is economically unsustainable. One solution is a national oil savings requirement. Through fuel efficient vehicles, sustainably made biofuels, and stronger efficiency standards, we can achieve a healthy, stable economy and reduce heat trapping emissions that cause global warming. Our future depends on our reducing oil demand now.

www.nrdc.org/air

March 2006

©2006 Natural Resources
Defense Council

America’s 20-million-barrel-a-day habit costs our economy \$300 billion annually. That’s \$800 million a day that could have gone to paying employees, making capital improvements, or investing in research & development. That’s \$800 million less spent at the grocery store, department store, or book store—every day.

Not only is our oil addiction putting America’s economy in danger, but it is also putting our national security at risk. America imports significantly more than half of the billions of barrels of oil we use every year. And these imports come from, among other sources, OPEC countries that don’t keep America’s best interests close to their hearts.

It’s a simple formula: the less oil we demand, the less oil we have to buy. And the less oil we have to buy, the less we’re dependent on a single fuel source often supplied by unstable areas of the globe.

The Fuel Choices for American Security Act is a first step to securing America.

There is bipartisan legislation in Congress right now, S. 2025, that would save at least 2.5 million barrels of oil each day within a decade. That’s more than we currently import from the Persian Gulf.

The Fuel Choices for American Security Act will reduce the amount of oil we need to fuel our economy, increase our national security, protect

“We have a serious problem. America is addicted to oil.”

jobs now at risk in the automobile sector, and expand the market for fuels made from agricultural products grown right here at home.

By taking steps domestically to reduce our consumption of and dependence on oil, we can break the chain of addiction to oil—particularly oil imports. And as we reduce America’s oil consumption, we can concurrently develop our own supply of renewable fuel right here at home. This saves American jobs, American dollars, and American lives.



America’s security depends on our reducing oil demand now.

Republicans and Democrats; conservatives and liberals; defense hawks, religious leaders, environmentalists, and labor—all agree that the Fuel Choices for American Security Act can put the United States on an immediate road to oil independence. Today’s efficient technologies and new fuels could cut U.S. oil demand by 25 percent by 2025. To take advantage of our potential, the legislation includes:

- **Concrete oil savings targets**, starting at 2.5 million barrels of oil per day within 10 years.

Oil is the lifeblood of the American economy. Nearly 100 percent of the U.S. transportation sector depends on oil. Transportation, which forms the backbone of our economy, is responsible for two-thirds of current U.S. oil demand, with passenger cars and light trucks alone accounting for nearly half of total U.S. oil consumption. It’s clear that reducing demand from the transportation sector will result in a more stable economy and less expensive business practices.

- **Incentives for automotive manufacturers** and parts suppliers to invest in more efficient technologies to get Detroit’s Big Three back on their feet in the face of rising oil prices.
- **Incentives for American farmers** to grow a new generation of fuels made from plants, and for local gas station owners to install new pumps to get biofuels into drivers’ tanks, as well as requirements to boost production of flexible fuel vehicles.
- **The power to set new efficiency performance standards** for tires and heavy duty trucks.

Beyond the first step: A vision for America’s oil independence

Saving oil is a matter of national commitment. Technologies exist today that can reduce wasteful use of oil in vehicles, industry, aviation, and buildings. A realistic strategy for reducing America’s dependence on oil involves four key components:

- 1. Commitment to a national strategy for oil savings**, the first step of which is adopting the Fuel Choices for American Security Act.
- 2. Increased fuel choice** by making every car a flexible fuel vehicle that can run on renewable fuels besides gasoline, and by boosting production of cellulosic ethanol—an alternative fuel made from plant materials such as tall prairie grass, grown by American farmers.
- 3. Investment in domestic factories, jobs, and innovation** that will make American cars competitive in the new market for more efficient vehicles and incentives for consumers and small businesses to purchase these vehicles.
- 4. Accelerated oil savings in the transportation sector**, through efficiency improvements, such as idling reduction for heavy duty trucks, and investments in public transportation and transit-oriented development to reduce the vehicle-miles traveled and help curb suburban sprawl.