

Dear Friend,

Let me be blunt: the catastrophic oil spill in the Gulf never should have happened. And while we may not yet have found the engineering design to plug the leak completely today, the real failure has been thirty years of negligent energy policy. The only true solution to preventing this again is simply this: end our dependence on oil and transform our economy into one based on clean technology jobs.

I spend the vast majority of time as your Representative aggressively fighting for alternatives to traditional fossil fuels. I do that because that one issue --our dependence on oil-- impacts every other issue with which we deal: national security (we buy oil from our petrodollar adversaries to fuel our weapons systems to protect us from the same adversaries); taxes (we pay among the highest school taxes in America to power our school buildings and buses and transfer \$1 billion a day to Arab oil dealers to build schools for their students); and jobs (we are falling behind China, Germany, Spain and other countries in clean-tech job growth and exports). And now the oil spill in the Gulf is a powerful reminder of our environmental security, where oil is spreading and threatening our coastlines and beaches.

For years, I have been fighting to reduce our dependence on oil and ignite a new generation of clean tech jobs. Here's how:

- For three decades, we have slashed federal investments in research and development of renewable energies and energy efficiency technologies by 86 percent and doubled our oil imports from the Persian Gulf. Meanwhile, China invested \$34.6 billion in clean energy in 2009 alone- outpacing the U.S., which only invested \$18.6 billion last year. In the past four years, as a member of the subcommittee that funds the Department of Energy (DOE), I have successfully increased U.S. investments. I have led the successful fight to double the budget for the DOE energy efficiency and renewable energy office and other critical job-creating investments. I also co-founded the Sustainable Energy and Environmental Coalition (SEEC) in Congress.

- We will not effectively displace oil until we make it more affordable for homeowners and building owners to retrofit their properties and lower their utility bills. I have passed a creative initiative in the House of Representatives that would enable local towns and states to finance and install energy efficient windows, insulate homes, install solar panels and other renewable

technologies, and much more. This program, called Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) bonds, would provide you with the full front-end financing for these improvements, dramatically lower your LIPA bills, and create thousands of jobs.

- Americans' transportation accounts for the majority of our fuel consumption. That is why I have introduced the Clean Cities Program Authorization Act to support alternative fueling stations and vehicles on Long Island. I also worked with the Greater Long Island Clean Cities Coalition to secure nearly \$14 million for these initiatives on Long Island which will reduce our dependence on traditional dirty fuels and make the air our families breathe cleaner.

- For years, I have been an outspoken critic of the influence of big oil companies in Washington. Let's face it: BP lied to regulators that it had a plan to prevent and remediate oil spills in the Gulf; and those regulators not only took BP's word for it, but accepted gifts and favors from the very people they were supposed to regulate! That is why I have pushed for a complete overhaul of the Department of Interior's Minerals Management Service.□□

#### WHERE WE GO FROM HERE:

Most recently, in response to increased pressure, BP has reached a preliminary agreement with the Obama Administration to pay \$20 billion over several years into an independent account that will compensate Gulf residents affected by the spill.□ After learning of this crisis, I immediately contacted BP and the Administration to prepare for the potential impact of the spill on Long Island. I demanded that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provide forecasting and modeling of the possibility of the oil reaching the coastlines of New York.□ It is imperative that we continue to act quickly to ensure that BP is held accountable for this disaster and that we make every effort to protect our environment and economy from further harm.□

For more information on my work promoting clean energy, please visit my website at <http://israel.house.gov>.

Sincerely,

Steve Israel

Member of Congress