



Opinion

Edward Cross: Biden's energy policies reason for rising energy costs. Here is how to lower gas prices.

By Edward Cross / Special to Gannett Kansas
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As the Biden Administration calls for an investigation into rising gas prices and begins tapping into the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to help slow rising gas prices, it is important to pull back the curtain on the ideologically-driven processes the Biden Administration is using to justify these bad policy decisions.

The Biden administration need look no further than their own actions to find the primary reason energy prices have escalated since he took office. Within the first week of office, Biden issued an Executive Order halting all U.S. drilling permits and federal leasing. He added further injury to the American oil and gas industry through a batch of punitive, unnecessary, and burdensome regulations on oil and gas operations. These actions have severely hampered American oil and gas companies' ability to adequately supply the market and have put American Energy Independence at risk.

The market supply deficit which has been artificially created by the Biden administration can quickly be erased by simply reversing these punitive oil and gas policies. American consumers see through this political charade and demand these policies be ended.

Tapping into the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to help slow rising gas prices is not a prudent policy decision. Gas prices have and will continue to rise due to production restrictions on federal lands, cancellation of the Keystone XL Pipeline, and heightened environmental regulations, including those on methane emissions. In addition, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) recently rejected President Biden's request for more crude exports to the U.S.

We should not extract oil from the SPR to address a self-inflicted crisis caused by this administration. We must continue to reserve the world's largest supply of emergency crude for national emergencies that cannot otherwise be prevented.

During the February 2021 weather event that descended upon Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, oil reserves were used due to the incapacity of pipeline operations. In other emergencies, the SPR

released 1.5 million barrels of crude oil to aid Louisianans after Hurricane Ida and 11 million in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

There is no reason to use our country's safety net to bail out President Biden's failed policies and poor planning. Rather, it would be in our best interest to reopen oil and gas production on federal lands and ease regulatory restrictions on domestic production, which would equate to a 20% increase in our domestic oil production. If we were to withdraw reserves from the SPR that are currently priced at \$29/per barrel and forced to replace them at a cost of over \$80/per barrel (and growing), we would be creating another economic nightmare for taxpayers.

Higher gas prices hurt the American public. Encouraging domestic oil and gas production helps to create American jobs, energy independence from Russia and the Middle East, and cheaper visits to the pump.

Resorting to withdrawals from the SPR only postpones reality and creates larger economic concerns for the future. At a time when we are experiencing harsh winter storms and hurricanes, along with an uncertain global geopolitical environment, future withdrawals from the SPR may be urgently needed. We must ensure the SPR is fully stocked and able to protect Americans the way it was intended to.

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