

*to House Press Gallery**News release — from the office of*

Congressman Harley O. Staggers

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*file*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON- Pointing to the possibility that U.S. oil imports from the Middle East may be cut off, Rep. Harley Staggers (D.-W.Va.), chairman of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, has introduced legislation which would set-up an emergency program to help the nation reduce its consumption of petroleum products in an emergency situation.

Staggers pointed out that the Emergency Petroleum Act (H.R. 11031) is identical to a measure (S.2589) offered in the Senate by Sen. Henry Jackson (D.-Wash.)

"Any significant interruptions of our oil supplies could cause hardships," Staggers said, "We can't afford to wait until an emergency situation is upon us to decide what to do. We must act now to prepare a plan that will deal quickly and effectively with any situation."

The bill authorizes the President to declare an emergency when the need for petroleum exceeds the supply by five per cent. It requires state and local governments to prepare contingency plans designed to reduce petroleum consumption by 10% within 10 days and by 25% in a month after an emergency is declared.

Possible emergency measures listed in the bill include: 50 mile-per-hour speed limits, required engine tune-ups, use of car pools, greater reliance on public transportation, homeowner energy conservation programs, cutbacks in airline flights, reduced heating in federal buildings, and greater reliance on coal by power plants.

"I hope none of these measures will become necessary," Staggers remarked, "but we must be prepared to act quickly if the situation becomes serious."