

Today, members of the Blue Dog Coalition announced their endorsement of H.R. 1380, the New Alternative Transportation to Give Americans Solutions (NAT GAS) Act of 2011. The legislation, which has broad bipartisan support, would pave the way for consumers to change how they power their vehicles by encouraging private investment in natural gas refueling stations and by providing incentives for the production and purchase of natural gas vehicles.

"With folks experiencing so much pain at the pump, we should be doing everything we can to bring down fuel prices now and stabilize them for the long-term. We already have the American know-how and ingenuity to make cleaner, more efficient vehicles that run on alternative fuels found here at home, like natural gas," said Congressman John Barrow (D-GA), Blue Dog Co-Chair for Policy. "The key to the puzzle is building new fueling infrastructure that would support these types of alternative fueled vehicles. If we can crack that nut - which this legislation will help do - Americans across the country will benefit from having a new transportation fuel for their vehicles that will both improve our environment and increase our national security by weaning us off foreign oil."

"Promoting natural gas fueled vehicles is a win-win-win; consumers will have less pain at the pump, America will become less dependent on foreign oil and will see more energy jobs and a cleaner environment," said Congressman Jim Matheson (D-UT), Chair of the Blue Dog Energy Task Force.

Matheson said as on-the-shelf technology, there are currently over 12 and a half million natural gas vehicles in use worldwide, yet fewer than 150,000 currently in the United States.

"Developing our domestic energy resources creates jobs and moves America toward energy independence," said Congressman Jason Altmire (D-PA), Vice-Chair of the Blue Dog Energy Task Force. "By utilizing our vast natural gas resources - such as those in the Marcellus Shale - as a transportation fuel and making it easier for consumers to purchase natural gas vehicles, we can improve our economy and enhance our energy security."

The NAT GAS Act of 2011 includes an extension of the current tax credit on natural gas fuel, a new tax credit for production of natural gas vehicles and a tax credit for installing natural gas refueling stations. By promoting production and access to natural gas, the bill provides consumers with additional options for powering their vehicles, diversifies the country's vehicle

fleets, promotes job creation at home and reduces the nation's dependence on foreign oil.

“Compressed natural gas is one of the cleanest, most abundant sources of fuel found and processed right here in America,” said Congressman Mike Ross (D-AR), Blue Dog Co-Chair for Communications and a member of the Congressional Natural Gas Caucus. “Our country spends over \$300 billion a year importing energy from other countries, particularly those in the Middle East. With serious investments in alternative energies like compressed natural gas, we have an opportunity to keep these dollars here at home in a way that helps our environment, creates jobs and lowers the price of fuel for all Americans.”

“This legislation will be a defining moment in the history of our nation's energy policy, and I am pleased to get the full support of the Blue Dog Coalition,” said Congressman Dan Boren (D-OK), Blue Dog Whip. “Our nation is at a crossroads when it comes to energy, and the decisions we make today in Congress will determine the daily cost of energy for millions of consumers and businesses across the nation. By fully utilizing America's vast natural gas resources, we have a real opportunity to make a sweeping impact on our nation's economic future. I believe that natural gas vehicles are a cleaner, cheaper fuel alternative than the current OPEC oil that Americans fuel their cars with.”

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