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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4024

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State of Washington                      58th Legislature                      2003 Regular Session

By Representatives Morris and Conway

Read first time . Referred to .

1            TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
2            AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF  
3            REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
4            UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE HONORABLE SPENCER  
5            ABRAHAM, SECRETARY OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY:

6            We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
7            the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
8            represent and petition as follows:

9            WHEREAS, The strategic petroleum reserve was first established in  
10           the 1970s to provide a source of crude oil to meet United States needs  
11           in the event of a severe disruption in petroleum supply; and

12           WHEREAS, In 2001, the president directed the federal department of  
13           energy to fill the strategic petroleum reserve to its maximum capacity  
14           of seven hundred million barrels as quickly as possible; and

15           WHEREAS, In 2002, the federal department of energy decided to fill  
16           the strategic petroleum reserve without regard to crude oil prices; and

17           WHEREAS, Crude oil price increases caused by strategic petroleum  
18           reserve deposits spiked spot prices of home heating oil by thirteen  
19           percent, jet fuel by ten percent, and diesel fuel by eight percent; and

1           WHEREAS, The strategic petroleum reserve now holds six hundred  
2 million barrels of crude oil, the largest volume in its history; and

3           WHEREAS, Crude oil prices are nearing a twelve-year high; and

4           WHEREAS, In the past, when faced with spiking oil prices, oil  
5 companies delivering crude oil to the strategic petroleum reserve have  
6 delayed deliveries; and

7           WHEREAS, Decisions to defer scheduled oil deliveries when oil  
8 prices were high, in exchange for deposits of extra oil at a later  
9 date, resulted in lost opportunities for taxpayer savings; and

10          WHEREAS, When oil prices have exceeded thirty dollars per barrel,  
11 administrations have ordered oil to be released from the strategic  
12 petroleum reserve; and

13          WHEREAS, The federal department of energy continues to plan for  
14 delivery of some of the largest crude oil shipments to the strategic  
15 petroleum reserve in years; and

16          WHEREAS, Putting oil into the reserve will reduce world oil  
17 supplies, and drive crude oil prices higher; and

18          WHEREAS, This plan will cause the economic damage that the  
19 strategic petroleum reserve was designed to prevent; and

20          WHEREAS, Rising crude oil prices hurt American consumers and  
21 businesses by increasing the cost of gasoline and oil for consumers and  
22 increasing operating costs for business; and

23          WHEREAS, Oil companies and oil-producing countries profit at the  
24 expense of these consumers and businesses;

25          NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the  
26 federal department of energy suspend further strategic petroleum  
27 reserve deposits until surging crude oil prices stabilize, consumers  
28 get relief from rising prices for gasoline, home heating oil, and other  
29 petroleum products, and commercial inventories increase; and

30          Your Memorialists further respectfully pray that, if delayed  
31 deliveries are not possible, the federal department of energy should  
32 calm markets by immediately releasing any delivered oil into the  
33 marketplace; and

34          Your Memorialists further respectfully pray that the federal  
35 department of energy restore market-based criteria for granting  
36 deferrals.

37          BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
38 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United

1 States, the Honorable Spencer Abraham, Secretary of the United States  
2 Department of Energy, the President of the United States Senate, the  
3 Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress  
4 from the State of Washington.

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