

I'm glad President Bush is talking about our nation's energy problems. But he's done this before, and each time his statements were followed by inaction.

In this year's State of the Union, the President is asking for authority to revise fuel economy standards for passenger cars. However, former Transportation Secretary Mineta testified before the House Energy and Commerce Committee on May 3, 2006, that the Administration already has authority to increase these standards. That's why many in the House of Representatives urged the President to increase fuel economy standards in June 2006. Unfortunately, the President still has taken no action, instead preferring to lobby Congress for broad discretion to raise or lower the standards as the Administration sees fit.

In fact, one of the easiest ways for the President to begin to address greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector would be to grant approval for California's tailpipe standards to go into place. More than 100 members of Congress wrote to the President to urge this action in September 2006, but still his Administration has taken no action.

In the State of the Union, the President also seeks to revise the Renewable Fuel Standard in order to allow coal-to-liquids to count against the standards. A coalition of environmental organizations highlighted the problem with this approach earlier this week. They wrote to Congress and stated:

Relying on coal-to-liquids to fuel transportation could nearly double global warming pollution per gallon of fuel as compared with the petroleum-based fuels we use today. For example, using coal-based transportation fuel in a Honda Civic would mean doubling the CO₂ emissions from that vehicle, which would be equivalent to operating a Hummer H3 run on conventional gasoline.

This is just the latest in a string of disappointments from this Administration.

In September 2000, the President criticized the previous Administration. He complained that oil consumption had increased to the highest level in history, that imports of foreign oil had increased to the highest level ever and that the U.S. was spending more than \$300 million per day on imported oil.

Now, seven years into the Bush Administration, the nation's oil consumption has increased to the highest level ever, imports of foreign oil are even higher, and we now spend well over \$750 million per day on imported oil.

Last year's "addicted to oil" speech led to no meaningful action. The new Democratic Congress won't let that happen again.