

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell voted today to promote responsible domestic oil production by voting in favor of H.R. 6515, The DRILL Act, which encourages lease holders to develop 20 million acres of oil and natural gas in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. The legislation, considered under suspension of the rules, failed by a vote of 244 to 173.

“As I’ve said before, in addition to investing in long-term solutions such as solar energy, we have to increase our domestic natural gas and oil production,” said Mitchell. “The provisions in this bill, including ensuring that Alaskan oil is not exported, would increase the supply at home. It’s disappointing, at a time when Americans are struggling, that these efforts are being blocked.”

The DRILL Act keeps all Alaskan oil in the United States by prohibiting its export to other nations. It also requires the government to quickly facilitate the construction of an oil pipeline from the National Petroleum Reserve to meet with the current Valdez pipeline as well as the first natural gas pipeline from Alaska to the continental United States.

The DRILL Act calls for oil and gas companies to “use or lose” their permits on 68 million acres of leased inactive public land, 20 million of which are in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. The reserve can provide an estimated 10.6 billion barrels of oil.