

# NEWS

*from the office of*

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For Immediate Release  
July 28, 2005

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## **Congresswoman Watson Opposes Energy Policy Act of 2005**

(Washington, DC)— Congresswoman Diane E. Watson (CA-33rd) today voted against the Energy Conference Report (the Energy Policy Act of 2005), characterizing it as "a multi-billion dollar corporate giveaway to oil, coal and nuclear interests."

"The bill fails in every area to address our nation's dangerous and growing dependence on foreign oil. Gasoline prices have reached record highs this year, well in excess of \$2.00 a gallon in California, which has some of the most expensive gas prices in the nation," said Watson. "Consumers are having to make hard choices between putting gas in their cars to get to work or food on their table. Yet this bill does not contain any provisions that will provide consumers with relief from rising fuel prices. Nor does it reduce American's consumption of fossil fuels, a major source of global warming.

"We all remember 2000 and 2001 when California, reduced to third world country status, suffered from rolling power blackouts. Although many of us suspected that energy companies were gouging consumers, it is now well documented in court records that corporate scofflaws such as Enron and Reliant manipulated Western energy markets to charge excessive prices. This bill fails to make consumers in the West whole and to ensure that they are refunded their overcharges.

"The bill is also seriously deficient in a host of other areas. It contains multiple loopholes that roll back the Clean Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Protection Act. Public health, the public water supply, and public lands are in danger of being seriously compromised by this bill.

"Finally, the bill requires an inventory of oil and natural resources in offshore areas, including areas now closed to drilling. I fear that the inventory may be the precursor of an attempt by the administration to reopening these areas to offshore drilling, which is of great concern to residents of California."

Congresswoman Watson is the Ranking Member of the Committee on Government Reform's Subcommittee on Energy and Resources. She served as a conferee to the House/Senate conference on the energy bill.