

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16) today slammed House Democrats for attempting to use the crisis in the Gulf to pass an energy tax on American families after Democrat leadership scheduled a vote on a bill to raise taxes on domestic oil production six-fold.

“Unfortunately, this bill isn’t about preventing future oil spills or cleaning up the Gulf,” Rooney said. “Instead, the Pelosi Congress has gone back to the well and brought up another tax on energy. This bill won’t prevent another oil spill, but it will drive up prices at the pump and make it more difficult for families and small businesses to make ends meet.

“This is yet another tax on middle class families from a Democratic Congress that’s dead-set on squeezing every dime they can out of American taxpayers.”

The Democrats’ bill would increase taxes on domestic oil production from 8 cents per barrel to as much as 49 cents per barrel, imposing billions of dollars in new taxes at the gas pump on Americans.

“Because this new tax is only imposed on domestic oil production, it will only deepen our dependence on foreign oil and further indebt our nation to those who wish us harm.

“Instead of passing this misguided tax increase, we need to be looking at ways to hold BP accountable and prevent tragedies like the Gulf spill from ever happening again. Then we need to get to work, finally, on a long-term, all-of-the-above energy solution.”

Rooney is a cosponsor of the “Oil Spill Prevention Act,” H.R. 5572, which would:

- 1) Prevent conflicts of interest at the Minerals Management Service (MMS) by separating the office responsible for safety and environmental protection from the leasing office, which collects revenues;
- 2) Require random drug testing of MMS employees;
- 3) Close the revolving door between MMS and oil companies by requiring employees to wait at least two years before working for an oil company;
- 4) Strengthen oversight by mandating that missed inspections be rescheduled and eliminating categorical exemptions from environmental requirements; and,
- 5) Eliminate the cap on the financial liability of oil companies responsible for offshore spills.

###