

## **Speaker Pelosi Would ‘Save the Planet’ with Higher Gas Prices** **by Dennis T. Avery**

Nancy Pelosi has changed her mind. She’ll allow a vote on drilling for America’s offshore oil potential after all—sort of.

To paraphrase the old saying, however, “A woman convinced against her will is of the same opinion still.” Pelosi’s first reaction to the public’s drilling demands was, “We’ve got a planet to save. Nothing less is at stake other than civilization as we know it.”

Mrs. Pelosi represents the most liberal city in America, and she wants the U.S. to cut its greenhouse emissions in half by 2050. She’s backing cap-and-trade legislation that would literally make gas, oil and coal too expensive to burn.

Don’t worry about the oil companies actually doing more offshore drilling under her new bill. The U.S. Geological Survey thinks most of the economically recoverable offshore oil is within 50 miles of the coast. Pelosi’s bill would open some Outer shelf areas beyond 50 miles, but it would permanently ban drilling in all areas within 50 miles without the state’s approval—and she’s offering the states no cut of the oil money to encourage their OK. This bill is just a lie to the American people about encouraging more U.S. oil; it’s election-year cover for the House Democrats.

Also remember that the final line of eco-defense is always the courts. In February, the Feds leased 487 parcels for oil exploration in the coastal regions of Alaska’s Chuckchi Sea—and the Green movement has already ensnared all 487 leases in lawsuits. In 1973, faced with the OPEC oil embargo, Congress had to waive the environmental laws to permit the Trans-Alaska Pipeline.

After Pelosi’s taxpayer-funded trip to Greenland last year, her press release said, “We witnessed the effect of global warming on the ice sheets, and the economic impact on the Inuit people. . . . Fishing and hunting and the tourism attracted by dog sledding have all been adversely affected by the warming climate.” Don’t laugh. Dogsled tourism was literally the only “economic impact” she could find in Greenland, which was warmer in the 1930s than today.

As a young mother in 1969, Mrs. Pelosi moved from the East Coast to San Francisco—the very year of the infamous oil spill off Santa Barbara that helped trigger the original U.S. ban on offshore drilling. “We learned then that oil and water don’t mix,” she once told a Congressional hearing on drilling bans. The problem for Speaker Pelosi is that the ground has recently been shifting under her feet. Ocean-well spills are now prevented by automatic shut-off valves at the well-heads. Recent oil spills have been from single-hulled tankers, not drilling.

Then California’s famous “rolling blackouts” starved Californians of energy in 2000–2001 and led both people and jobs to flee the state. California still hasn’t built any new power plants, but with falling temperatures the snowpack has recently been more adequate.

Now \$4 gasoline has weakened California's fear of drilling. The Santa Barbara county supervisors recently voted to permit offshore drilling, in a symbolic gesture. Supervisor Brooks Firestone said that technology had made offshore drilling far safer, and: "We do need the jobs. We do need the money. We do need the oil."

Meanwhile, Brazil has invested \$1 billion in drilling 20 oil wells more than 4 miles deep into an offshore subsalt layer—and tapped into an estimated 80 billion barrels of oil that suddenly make Brazil one of the world's top-ten oil producers.

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