

Tulane University to Host Congressional Debate on National Energy Policy

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The House Democratic Caucus and the House Republican Conference, in cooperation with the Democratic Leadership Council, the Congressional Institute and the Entergy-Tulane Energy Institute will hold the third debate in the groundbreaking "Congress Debates" Monday, July 28 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 in the Kendall Cram Lecture Hall (room 213) of Tulane University's Lavin-Bernick Center.

Eight lawmakers – four House Republicans and four House Democrats – will participate in the debate. Launched to foster bipartisan discourse on the most important challenges facing America, "Congress Debates" kicked off in late February in Washington D.C. with a discussion focused on the economy, followed by an April dialogue in Cincinnati on health care policy.

The Entergy-Tulane Energy Institute is the host of the debate. Founded in 2003 as a systematic research program aimed at improving the understanding of the integration of energy markets, policy, technology, and the environment, the Institute is set to host what is sure to be a vibrant discussion among leading voices on this critical public policy issue.

Participants include: Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.), Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), Rep. Jay Inslee (D-Wash.), Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-Mont.), Rep. Hilda Solis (D-Calif.), Rep. Bart Stupak (D-Mich.), Rep. Fred Upton (R-Mich.), and Rep. Zach Wamp (R-Tenn.). The debate will be moderated by a representative of The Politico, a Washington-based political journalism newspaper and website.

"We welcome this distinguished congressional delegation to Tulane and look forward to a substantive discussion on energy, an issue that is of critical importance to the future of our state, nation and world," said Tulane University President Scott Cowen.

"As we have seen in the prior two sessions of the "Congress Debates" series, having serious, civil conversations on such critical issues as the economy, health care and now energy yields great results, such as a bipartisan economic stimulus package and a bipartisan Medicare package" said Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-Ill.), chairman of the House Democratic Caucus. "I look forward to this exchange of ideas about the future of our nation, and to working with my Republican and Democratic colleagues to tackle one of the toughest challenges of our generation."

"The "Congress Debates" series has been successful in providing a forum for members of Congress to break through the Beltway clutter and engage in a healthy exchange of ideas," said Rep. Adam Putnam (R-Fla.), Chairman of the House Republican Conference. "This discussion is particularly well-timed as energy is the number one issue confronting the American people right now. We have had two excellent debates so far, and we expect to make it three in a row in New Orleans."

"In America's interest we've got to get beyond the polarized stalemate on energy policy," said Al From, founder and CEO of the Democratic Leadership Council. "The members of Congress who are engaging in this debate should be lauded for doing what too many fail to do: sitting down and trying to hammer out a way forward."

"This is a great opportunity to hold a real debate on an issue affecting Americans," said Mark Strand, president of the Congressional Institute. "This debate, like the other two before it, allows citizens to compare how the competing philosophies and principles of the two political parties are applied to real life problems."

The debate series has garnered national praise. The Capitol Hill news site CongressNow characterized one of the debates as "cordial disagreement rather than partisan combat," while The New York Times suggested "a set of debates that shows lawmakers airing their legitimate differences on issues without coming to blows can only be a good thing."