

Energy Policy: Hot Topic for "Congress Debates"

July 23, 2008 12:45 PM Keith Brannon

kbrannon@tulane.edu

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" on Monday (July 28) from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Kendall Cram Lecture Hall (room 213) of Tulane University's Lavin-Bernick Center.

Debating national energy policy will be eight lawmakers ? four House Republicans and four House Democrats. The Entergy-Tulane Energy Institute, part of the A. B. Freeman School of Business, is hosting the event, where a vibrant discussion among leading voices on this critical public policy issue is expected.

"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.

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.

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 healthcare policy.

"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.), chair 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.”

Rep. Adam Putnam (R-Fla.), chair of the House Republican Conference, added, “This discussion is particularly well-timed as energy is the No. 1 issue confronting the American people right now.”

“In America's interest, we've got to get beyond the polarized stalemate on energy policy,” said Al From, founder and chief executive officer 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.”

The debate series has garnered national praise. The Capitol Hill news site Congress Now 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.”

The [Entergy-Tulane Energy Institute](#) was founded in 2003 as a systematic research program aimed at improving the understanding of the integration of energy markets, policy, technology and the environment.