

Annapolis Update #5 - Illegal Alien Legislation

This session I have introduced nine bills. The two bills I am putting the most effort behind are:

House Bill 1130 Controlled Dangerous Substances - Manufacturing, Distributing, or Dispensing - Revocation of License to Drive, and House Bill 1101 Criminal Law - Early Release of Inmate Subject to Deportation Order

These are law-and-order bills, which I call "Get out of Dodge" bills. HB 1130 would revoke the driver's license of anyone convicted of distributing hard drugs such as heroin, methamphetamine, crack, and cocaine. It would be an additional penalty on top of the jail sentence. The best part is, it won't cost the taxpayers a dime. The bill has gained the support of law enforcement agencies across the State; they see this as an effective tool in the war on drugs. Since law enforcement know who the drug dealers are, this bill would allow police to pull them over, search their vehicles, and generally make drug dealers' lives miserable. Our hope is that this will make them want to "Get out of Dodge."

HB 1101 is already law in New York State and Arizona, where it has saved their taxpayers over \$28 million. The bill would grant early release to illegal aliens provided that they are immediately deported. If they return to the United States, they would serve out double the time remaining on their sentences. This would only affect people convicted of non-violent crimes. Violent offenders would serve their entire sentence, then be deported.

Both bills are being heard before the House Judiciary Committee, HB 1101 on Tuesday, March 11 at 1 pm, and HB 1130 on Wednesday, March 12 at 1 pm. You can access bill information by going to the General Assembly website <http://mlis.state.md.us> and click on Bill Information and Status. Put in the bill number and the info screen will come up. If you click on the bill number in blue on that screen, the text of the bill will come up.

If you would like contact information for the Judiciary Committee to make your opinion known, please reply to this e-mail, and I will send it out to you.

Rick Impallaria
Delegate, District 7
rick.impallaria@house.state.md.us

Annapolis Update #4: Follow-up to Nuclear Energy

Thank you for the great number of responses you sent to the last update -- it was overwhelmingly positive, and has set up a great dialog on this important topic. Many people had questions and comments, and I'm doing this follow-up to give you the answers.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP? There are a number of things you can do to help generate public and political support for nuclear power: write

letters to your local newspapers; contact your local, state and federal elected officials and voice your support for nuclear energy; call in to talk radio programs; spread the truth about nuclear power and our need for it to re-educate people who are fearful and debunk the negative myths.

WHAT CAN BE DONE WITH THE SPENT FUEL? Europe, especially France, is much more advanced than the U.S. in nuclear technology -- we are 30 years behind the times. The French reprocess spent fuel. Their new, modern fleet of nuclear reactors is state-of-the-art. They are constantly researching ways to reprocess, recycle, and dispose of nuclear waste. Each year the technology gets better, and it is conceivable that what we now consider "waste" will in future be a valuable resource. And as a side note, the disposal facility at Yucca Mountain, Nevada can probably handle 1000 years of waste, not taking into account any coming advances in treatment of nuclear waste.

CAN NUCLEAR WASTE BE SAFELY TRANSPORTED BY ROAD? It is safer to transport nuclear waste than gasoline or chlorine. This is because the same safeguards used for nuclear weaponry are also used in the transportation of nuclear materials. We know that a nuclear warhead can be dropped from an airplane and fall safely to earth without detonating or causing environmental damage, unless it is intentionally detonated.

WOULD YOU LIVE NEAR A NUCLEAR PLANT? Yes. I would have no qualms for my family. And a good bill to propose would discount electricity for those living in proximity of a nuclear plant, the amount of the discount depending on distance from the plant.

IS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAPABLE OF SAFELY REGULATING NUCLEAR PLANTS? The government already safely regulates them. The government has its own reactors. The Navy has had nuclear submarines for 50 years without incident.

HOW MANY OF YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS FAVOR NUCLEAR POWER? I took a straw poll of our 23 members, and 75% are pro-nuclear, and 25% have an open mind about it. I don't believe anyone is totally opposed to it.

ARE THERE ANY OUTSTANDING NUCLEAR POWER COMPANIES? There are only a handful of companies that operate nuclear facilities. My personal feeling is that by re-regulating electricity production the energy industry in Maryland and throughout the country, the federal and state governments could play a very large role in moving toward clean, safe, and economical nuclear power.

IS THERE A WAY TO MAKE THE POWER GENERATED BY CALVERT CLIFFS PLANT AVAILABLE TO MARYLANDERS? There is a bill in this session (House Bill 624 - Energy Consumer Protection Act) to sell the cheap electricity produced by the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant to Marylanders first, rather than selling it out-of-state. This would help our electric rates to go down.

Rick Impallaria
Delegate, District 7
rick.impallaria@house.state.md.us

Folks:

This will be a longer message than usual, but I ask for your patience. I want to share with you my conclusions from almost six years of listening to testimony in my committee, the House Economic Matters Committee, on various energy sources and how they can help our state's and our nation's energy crisis.

Don Quixote is alive and well and chasing windmills across America, attempting to resolve our energy problems. His minions are regular visitors to the Annapolis General Assembly, bringing ludicrous plans for how to solve Maryland's utility problems.

What do I mean by this? Don Quixote lived in his own version of reality. He was attempting to hold onto outdated beliefs and, since there were no more dragons, he attempted to slay windmills. This describes some in the General Assembly, and some who come to testify before my committee in support of ideas for producing energy that have been proven over and over again not to work.

Solar energy is an example. At its very best, it will not be able to pay for itself - i.e., it's a loser - and couldn't produce even 1% of our energy needs. Wind power has just been abandoned by the State of Delaware. An intensive study by Levitan presented to my committee showed that a project to produce off-shore electric power would at best be a break-even proposition, and that there is no hope that a future technology would make windmills more productive.

For energy conservation, the Don Quixotes have come up with elaborate ways of forcing the public to use less energy. Their favored method is to raise the price so high that no one will be able to afford to use it. I have my own way of saving electricity, taught to me by my parents and grandparents, but it is only partially successful. That is, I shut off the lights my kids put on, scream and yell, and ask if they think we own stock in the electric company.

There is a true, safe, clean solution to our energy needs, but before I go into detail about it, I want to make a little analogy. When electricity was first coming into general use, people had concerns about its safety in the home. George Westinghouse had developed alternating current (AC), which was being used in homes to provide electric lighting, etc. safely and efficiently. Thomas Edison, who was a proponent of direct current, was finding his business lagging, so he developed the electric chair using alternating current in an attempt to convince people that AC is dangerous ("See, it can kill you."). Edison was unsuccessful in this, but if he had been, we might still be using candles to light our homes.

Keep this story in mind as we discuss nuclear power. Unfortunately for all of us, the first use of atomic power was the dropping of a bomb on Japan. So our first impression of nuclear power is of the devastation produced in war. However, had atomic energy been in use before the bomb was dropped, the bogeyman theory of the dangers of nuclear energy would have very much less credence, just as people did not believe Edison's attempt to "prove" AC electricity dangerous.

We also have to examine the "Three Mile Island" episode. That incident was not so much a problem with the reactor as with the monitoring system. There were several failures - of a water pump, a gauge, pressure valve, and backup pump. This type of failure could never occur today because of the improved backup systems. French advances in nuclear technology have made concerns about disposal of spent fuel rods more and more negligible.

We can solve our country's present day energy problems by stepping into the 21st century - by building 100 new nuclear reactors over the next ten years. The modern nuclear reactor makes the reactors of the 60's and 70's look like dinosaurs. They are much more efficient and have all modern safeguards. It is the difference between your 1966 Impala and your 2008 Impala with its On-Star system. If we as a people and a country have the courage to deal in hard facts, dispel the myths, and push forward immediately, the end result will be a better, safer, cleaner world for everyone.

And for those who say it can't be done, they'd probably be the same people who would say that Franklin Roosevelt was wrong for creating the Tennessee Valley Authority. This project provided affordable energy for Americans, power for the Manhattan Project, and provided the electricity to smelt the aluminum to build the planes that won World War II.

Once again, the world is at the very same crossroads. Present-day Don Quixotes want to return us to the cold and the dark, but who else wants to return to the past? Dependence on foreign oil and the rocketing cost of energy is bringing us to our knees. It is time that visionaries focus on the needs of our families and our country, not the phony myths and lies that are being perpetrated by the global warming crowd. Political correctness will not get the job done.

If we move forward with such a bold plan, our enemies and the oil-rich nations which are strangling us will find that we are no longer dependent on their oil, nor will it be necessary for us to send our young men and women to defend their oil or their extravagant lifestyles. Electricity will be so cheap that everyone in the nation will heat their homes with electric power. Businesses will thrive, no longer burdened by the outrageous cost of energy or an inability to obtain it. Heating oil will be diverted to use for powering machinery, thus even further decreasing our need for foreign oil. Electric cars will become the norm for all short commuter trips, once again cutting the need for foreign fuel.

So, yes, nuclear power is the only hope for our country to rebound for at least the next 100 years. We must have the courage to speak the truth and invest not just for our futures but for our children's futures. We are beyond short-term fixes. We must move forward with a comprehensive nuclear plan, not only for Maryland but for our country.

If you want to learn more about electricity and how it affects our lives, you could start with these topics: Edison and electric power; Roosevelt and the TVA, and modern nuclear technology.

Annapolis Update #3 - Governor O'Malley's Energy Conservation Plan -
Feb. 14, 2008

Governor Martin O'Malley's energy plan for Maryland was presented to my committee, Economic Matters, on Tuesday. His plan, in short, is to increase our utility rates, forcing the public to use less energy. His thinking is that people don't care how high their rates are, as long as they are paying less, and the way to achieve this is to make energy cost so high that none of us can afford to use it, which means we all use less, which makes our bills smaller. The Governor will use the increased money you are paying to buy energy-efficient refrigerators and light bulbs for poor people.

This is his energy plan. I am not kidding you, it really is his plan. I do not support it. I will be following up this brief report in a few days with the course I believe the state and the county should take to relieve our energy problems.

Rick Impallaria
Delegate, District 7

Update from Annapolis - Follow-Up to Budget Report - Feb. 13, 2008

Congratulations to you, concerned citizens. Many members of the Republican Caucus have agreed to join the Budget Reform Caucus. And word has come back to me that it is due to your e-mails. Your great concern about Maryland's budget problems seems to have been heeded, and they are now considering asking the entire Republican Caucus to vote against the budget.

So I ask you once again to put pressure on the Republican leadership of the Senate and the House to reject the out-of-control spending as contained in the budget.

As a side note, one of the main reasons Senator Andy Harris won the congressional primary for District 1 against Wayne Gilchrest is that Harris, like me, has consistently voted against the budget.

Thank you for all your efforts in favor of fiscal sanity.

Rick Impallaria
Delegate, District 7