



Committee on Natural Resources U.S. House of Representatives

Chairman Doc Hastings

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House Passes Bipartisan Legislation to Prevent Global Helium Shortage, Protect Jobs, & Ensure a Fair Return for Taxpayers

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House of Representatives passed [H.R. 527](#), the “*Responsible Helium Administration and Stewardship Act*” by a vote of 394 – 1. This bipartisan legislation, introduced by House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (R-WA), Ranking Member Ed Markey (D-MA), Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ), and Rep. Bill Flores (R-TX), is a common sense plan to sell helium from the Federal Helium Reserve in a responsible manner to prevent a global shortage, protect jobs and the economy, and ensure a fairer return for taxpayers.

By law, the Interior Department will lose the authority to fund and operate the Federal Helium Reserve as soon as October of this year, resulting in an immediate 30 percent reduction in the global helium supply. H.R. 527 applies free market reforms through semi-annual auctions and establishes a three-phase plan to sell off the remaining helium in the Reserve. These reforms will ensure a better return for taxpayers, protect our economy from severe supply disruptions, and promote the development of alternative domestic helium resources so our country is prepared when the Reserve does close.

“Today’s action by the House to pass this common sense legislation is important to saving jobs, protecting the American taxpayer, and avoiding a global helium shortage. Helium is critical to our daily lives and the 21st century economy. It is vital to life-saving procedures like MRIs, high-tech manufacturing, and America’s national defense operations. I hope this bipartisan legislation advances in the Senate and becomes law because the stakes are too high for inaction,” **said Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04).**

“Helium isn’t just for balloons, it’s used in MRI machines, high-tech manufacturing, and NASA rockets, which is why this issue rises above partisanship. Whether its spectrum auctions or helium auctions, I believe open and competitive markets are the best way to ensure fairness and a proper return to American taxpayers. I commend Chairman Hastings for joining with me on this bipartisan effort to pass this legislation that will help ensure a steady supply of helium for American businesses and our economy,” **said Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Rep. Ed Markey (MA-05).**

“With global demand for helium continuing to rise, we must work to prevent a worldwide shortage of this critical and economically important gas. This bipartisan legislation will extend the life of the Federal Helium Reserve and incorporate key, free-market reforms to the

program. As helium plays a key role in our economy and our everyday lives, it is important to ensure that there is not a shortage of this essential component to our high tech, healthcare, defense, and research sectors," **said Rep. Bill Flores (TX-17).**

"Anyone who has ever had an MRI scan, used a computer microchip, or accessed the Internet has -- perhaps without even knowing it -- relied upon technologies made possible by helium. Yet fire-sale pricing of this gas has squandered a relatively rare and valuable resource, reduced returns to taxpayers, and led to an unreliable supply," **said Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12).**

Click [here](#) to learn more about H.R. 527.

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