

“The Responsible Helium Administration and Stewardship Act” (H.R. 527)
(Vote scheduled for April 25)

The undersigned companies and organizations, representing entities that employ millions of Americans in advanced manufacturing and scientific research, urge the Congress to pass legislation to avoid a significant disruption in the supply of helium. An important step toward this goal is passage by the House of Representatives of the bipartisan “Responsible Helium Administration and Stewardship Act” (H.R. 527) (Hastings-Markey), scheduled for a vote on April 25.

Helium's unique physical and chemical properties have made it critical to a broad range of applications in the manufacture of numerous technologies, including semiconductors, aerospace, medical devices, chemicals, and fiber optics. It is also widely-used in scientific research. There is no known substitute for helium in many of these industrial and scientific applications. Therefore, enacting legislation to ensure a secure and continuous supply of helium is essential to maintaining U.S. leadership in both advanced manufacturing and cutting-edge scientific research.

Much of the U.S. and global supply of helium is provided by the Federal Helium Reserve. Under current law, later this year the Federal Helium Reserve will no longer be authorized to sell helium to private users, which would further exacerbate the supply constraints and price increases we are currently experiencing in the helium market. Legislation is urgently needed to authorize the Reserve to continue sales of helium to private users and avoid damage to critical sectors of the American economy. The legislation would create a market-based approach with increased transparency for the helium program, while at the same time adding hundreds of millions to the federal Treasury.

Time is of the essence to address the helium supply and avoid a needless disruption to America's economy and scientific research. An important and positive step forward toward addressing this issue would be House passage of H.R. 527.

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