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Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I commend the members of the Senate who sustained my veto of S. 1849 which would have extended price controls on domestic oil for another six months.

Today's vote was not an Administration victory. In the long run, it could well be a victory for homeowners who use heating oil, for drivers who buy gasoline, for factories and utilities which consume fuel to power their machinery, for farmers who use fuel to run their equipment and dry their crops -- for all Americans who depend on energy for their jobs and comfort and prosperity.

In sustaining this veto, the Senate took its first step toward curbing never-ending fuel price increases and our growing dependence on foreign oil producers. It is an important step toward producing more domestic fuel.

The American people should be gratified -- and the foreign oil producers should be aware -- that America is starting on the road to energy independence. I am confident that the people of the country are ready to walk that road.

I hope and trust that after these many months the Members of the Congress are ready to move ahead on a program for national energy independence.

If the Congress wishes to achieve decontrol more gradually, I will work with the members to achieve that objective. If not, the legislation which I have submitted today will ensure an orderly and fair transition away from price controls.

There is a lot of work to do to make America energy independent. Let's get on with it -- together.

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