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U.S. Oil Export Ban is De Facto Sanctions Regime Against Ourselves

Senators Introduce Bipartisan Amendment on Iran Bill to Lift Ban on Oil Exports

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Sens. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, and Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., today urged their Senate colleagues to support an amendment to the Iran Nuclear Agreement Act that would end the 40-year-old ban on crude oil exports and allow American producers to compete with Iran on the global market.



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In a colloquy on the Senate floor, Sens. Murkowski and Heitkamp said the existing restrictions on American oil producers are harming America’s competitiveness and leaving our friends and allies with little choice but to purchase oil from the tumultuous Middle East.

“American oil producers are generally prohibited from exporting overseas. Iran, on the other hand, currently exports more than 1 million barrels a day of oil,” **Sen. Murkowski** said. “Lifting the ban on U.S. exports would let American oil compete with Iranian oil, reduce Iranian revenue from oil exports, send a strong signal to U.S. allies that still depend on Iranian oil that alternative supplies are available, and lower global oil prices, which would decrease the price of gasoline and other consumer fuels.”

The amendment, introduced by Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Murkowski, and cosponsored by Sens. John Hoeven, R-N.D., James Lankford, R-Okla., and Heitkamp adds a third section to the Corker-Cardin Iran Review Act that would require the Department of Energy to do a report within 60 days on Iranian crude oil and condensate exports. It would then lift the de facto ban on U.S. crude oil and condensate exports, while still preserving the emergency authorities of the president to prohibit exports under certain conditions.



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“The antiquated policy that we’re talking about today didn’t have a lot of logic after we deregulated oil. And it has even less logic in the dangerous world that we live in today,” **Sen. Heitkamp** said. “We have an opportunity to say to our allies – whether it’s Japan or Europe – don’t worry about whether somebody is going to hold you hostage because we’ve got your back. But we can’t have their back if we don’t have the ability to export our crude oil. The bottom line is that the restriction against exports of crude oil makes no sense, absolutely none.”

Murkowski has [called](#) for ending the ban on crude oil exports and liberalizing America’s energy trade policies since the beginning of 2014.

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