

**To:** Dravis, Samantha[dravis.samantha@epa.gov]  
**From:** POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard  
**Sent:** Wed 8/30/2017 6:45:56 PM  
**Subject:** Markey urges Trump to tap SPR as Harvey boosts gasoline prices

By Ben Lefebvre

08/30/2017 02:42 PM EDT

Sen. [Ed Markey](#) (D-Mass.) today called on President Donald Trump to tap the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help prevent gasoline prices from surging in the wake of Tropical Storm Harvey.

"An immediate release of gasoline or crude oil, if also warranted, from the SPR would help protect consumers from price spikes at the pump and tame any market speculation that could be unduly affecting markets and harming consumers," Markey wrote in a [letter](#) to Trump urging him to tap into the roughly 680 million barrels of crude the Department of Energy keeps in storage in case of supply disruptions.

About 20 percent of the country's refining capacity is offline after Harvey battered the Gulf Coast region, the heart of the nation's oil industry. Valero Energy is now trying to restart two of its refineries in the Corpus Christi region, where Harvey first made landfall late Friday.

Gasoline prices at the pump were up six cents a gallon on Wednesday from a week ago, according to AAA. The price jump is likely to continue, as wholesale gasoline prices on Wednesday have climbed by a dime since Friday, before Harvey made landfall.

DOE had denied one refiner's request for crude oil from one of its Texas SPR sites earlier this week, saying it had evacuated staff from the site because of flooding. The reserve sites are now all operational, according to the DOE.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** Refiners will assess the damage to their sites in the coming weeks.

*To view online:*

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