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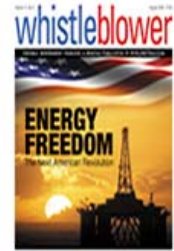
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Constitutionality of light bulb ban questioned

Congressman doubts China imports answer to U.S. energy crisis

Posted: June 19, 2008
11:15 pm Eastern

By Alyssa Farah
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WASHINGTON – Members of Congress are beginning to have second thoughts about the ban on incandescent [light bulbs](#) effective in 2014 as a result of an [energy bill](#) signed into law earlier this year.



Rep. Ted Poe, R-Texas, says his objection is very basic – the Constitution doesn't authorize Congress to do anything remotely like banning a product that has been used safely and efficiently for more than 100 years in favor of Chinese-imported compact fluorescent light [bulbs](#) that pose considerable health and safety risks.

Poe cited the dangers associated with CFLs, which carry small amounts of mercury that can enter the environment through breakage and disposal. He also objected to reliance on the CFL alternatives when, currently, all are made in China.

"Congress passed an energy bill that should be called the anti-American non-energy bill because it punishes Americans for using energy when it should be finding new sources of available energy," Poe stated.

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From the floor of the House, Poe addressed the dangers of the CFL bulbs, explaining the extensive cleanup required by the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) for simply breaking a bulb. When a bulb, which contains mercury, is broken, according to the EPA, the room must be evacuated for 15 minutes and aired out with windows, but not before all glass is removed, placed in a sealed glass jar and disposed of outside. Any remaining glass must be picked up with tape. In addition, [central heating](#) or air conditioning units must be turned off.

This is what the EPA officials say about light bulbs they *want* the public to use.

In addition, the bulbs cause photographs to fade and can interfere with radio signals, television and remote controls, according to Poe.

"Madam speaker, I have a Constitution here, like most members of Congress," Poe said. "I carry it with me, I've read it through and through but I don't see anywhere in the U.S. Constitution where it gives the government the right to control the type of light bulbs used in Dime Box, Texas, or anywhere else in the United States."

Poe criticized Congress' focus on regulation rather than working to develop natural resources during an energy crisis.

"I yearn for the day when Americans took care of America by developing our own abundant natural resources like coal, natural gas and crude oil to provide affordable energy to Americans," Poe remarked.



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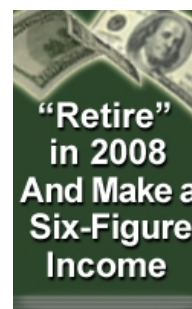
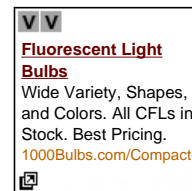
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Alyssa Farah is a WND editorial assistant.



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