



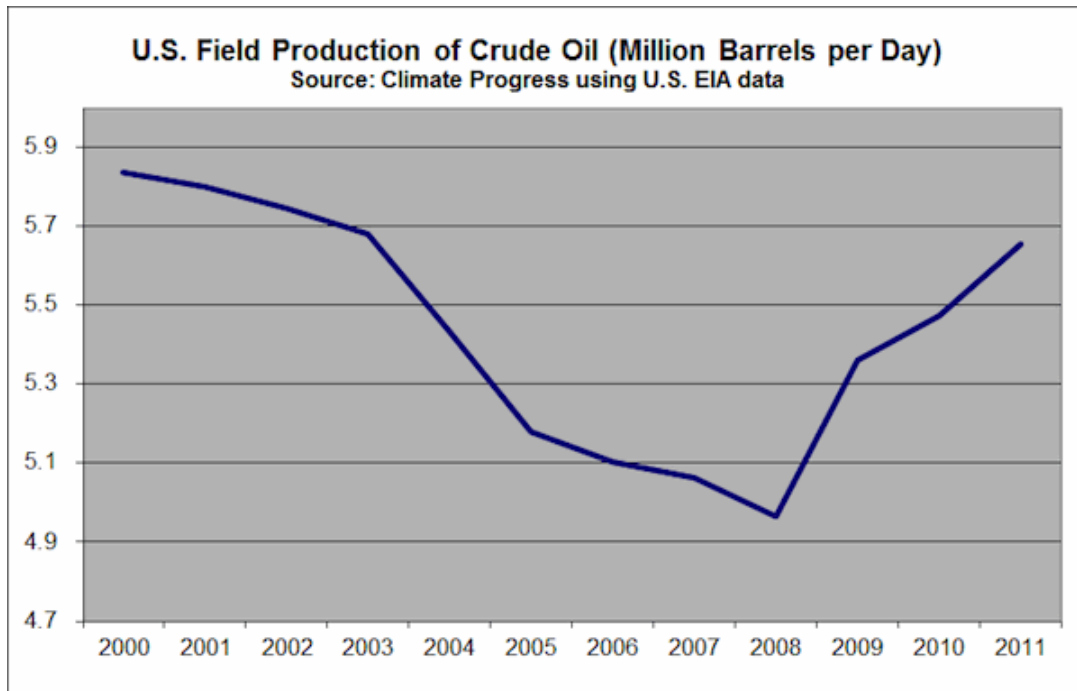
## ***GOP: ‘You Think We’re Going To Have A Press Conference Now To Congratulate The Administration For Decreasing Gas Prices?’***

By [Joe Romm](#) on May 9, 2012 at 10:29 am

The GOP’s plan to blame Obama’s policies for rising gasoline prices has run into one small bump in the road. Gasoline prices have dropped \$0.15 a gallon in the past month, to \$3.79 per gallon this week, down from its peak of \$3.94 in early April, according to The Energy Information Administration.

The public understands Obama isn’t to blame for high gasoline prices, as [recent polls make clear](#). Even the *Wall Street Journal* and Cato Institute agree: [“It’s not Obama’s fault that crude oil prices have increased.”](#)

After all, U.S. oil production has been soaring under this Administration, as the chart shows.



The facts didn't stop the former leader of the House GOP, Newt Gingrich, from blaming the price runup in the past 3 years on Obama: "All of this gigantic increase came from his policies." Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY), said in March that Mr. Obama should be held "fully responsible for what the American public is paying for gasoline."

As the AP [reported today](#), "Gasoline prices probably will not set any records this summer, thanks to a recent drop in the price of oil." Of course, peak oil and rising demand in the developing world will keep prices rising over the longer term, and instability in the MidEast and elsewhere will always cause price spikes. But Tom Kloza, chief oil analyst at the Oil Price Information Service, [said](#), "If I were betting in Vegas whether or not gas will be higher or lower on July 4th, I would say lower."

*E&E Daily* explains in [its story](#), "Falling prices complicate GOP push for regulatory rollbacks" (subs. req'd), efforts by the House GOP to use high gasoline prices to push their pro-pollution agenda have now stalled, and not just because the Senate opposes that effort.

But there is also a sense that House Republicans have less of a case to make with prices lower and expected to avoid the record highs that were feared earlier this spring....

"What, you think we're going to have a press conference now to congratulate the administration for decreasing gas prices?" Rep. Mike Simpson (R-Idaho) quipped during a brief interview yesterday.

Simpson, who runs the House Appropriations subcommittee that oversees EPA and the Department of Interior, added "And as gas prices fall, obviously you're not going to say as much, but it's still an issue."

Rep. Ed Whitfield (R-KY) sponsored a bill to delay EPA air quality rules until a study was completed on how they would impact gasoline prices, said:

“Let me just say this, there are a lot more points to be made to set up a contrast with President Obama than just gasoline prices. **So we can remove gasoline prices**, and I think we would have a lot of issues to talk about.”

This means the House GOP can move on to another phony issue.