



In Case You Missed It

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN DOC HASTINGS

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[Actions louder than words when it comes to Obama’s energy policies](#)

By House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings

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State of the Union speech might have been confused when he got to the energy portion of his remarks. Echoing phrases long used by Republicans, such as “all-of-the-above energy,” the president tried to not only promote oil and natural-gas development but also to take credit for increasing U.S. production.

Unfortunately, Obama’s change of heart appears to be more about election-year politics and less about putting real policies in place to achieve greater energy security.

While I’m more than happy to have the president talking about increasing American energy production, his actions need to match his words. The truth is that Obama’s policies have put some of our greatest energy resources off-limits and cost thousands of American jobs. The president’s energy rhetoric is a 180 from his actions, and in reality he is taking credit for pro-energy policies of past administrations and energy development on state and private land, over which his administration has less ability to impede production.

The Obama administration has spent the last three years enacting policies that make energy more expensive for American families by restricting access to our own vast energy resources. For example, in 2008, when Obama was elected, nearly all of our offshore areas were open for energy production, thanks to the actions of Congress and the Bush administration. Almost immediately after being sworn in, the president closed off newly opened offshore areas, placing the entire Atlantic and Pacific coasts, as well as portions of the Arctic, off-limits to new American energy production.

Whether it’s canceling more than 1 million acres of promising oil shale development in the West, slow-walking offshore permits, canceling lease sales or making plans to impose new regulations on hydraulic fracturing on federal land, this administration has been anything but helpful to the production of more American energy and more American jobs.

Obama might like to talk about energy production increasing and oil imports decreasing during his term in office, but the truth is that he's taking credit for the work of past administrations. The overwhelming majority of both offshore and onshore leases producing oil and natural gas were issued under the Clinton and Bush administrations — not the Obama administration.

As The Associated Press recently reported, Obama “oversells the government’s influence on the industry and ignores the fact that many wells coming into production were planned years ago, before he was president.”

What we can attribute to the Obama administration is the decrease of 250,000 barrels of oil per day in energy production off the shores of the Gulf of Mexico — a direct result of the administration’s de facto drilling moratorium.

The president also enjoys taking credit for the inherited boom in U.S. oil and natural-gas production on private and state lands — places where Obama’s regulatory fist has thus far had less of an impact. North Dakota alone has seen staggering increases in oil production on state and private lands, increasing production from only 2 million barrels per month in 2002 to nearly 16 million per month in January 2011. This goes to show what’s possible in terms of energy production and job creation when the federal government is not there to intervene.

In stark contrast, House Republicans have an active jobs plan to significantly expand American energy production offshore, onshore and in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve. This bipartisan plan will create more than 1 million American jobs, generate billions of dollars in revenue and reduce America’s reliance on unstable Middle Eastern oil.

Obama is finally admitting what Republicans have known all along — that more American-made energy is good for job creation, economic growth and national security. With summer driving season on the horizon, gasoline prices are already starting to climb closer to \$4 per gallon — more than double what they were when Obama took office. Expanding American energy production would help keep prices affordable for families and small businesses. That’s why more than 70 percent of Americans want increased American oil and natural-gas production.

When it comes to American energy, the president has a “listen to what I say, not what I do” approach. His lofty rhetoric signals his support for American energy production, but the anti-energy policies of his administration expose the real truth. With our economy, jobs and national security at stake, the American people need more than just empty words and promises. They need a real plan that will actually develop and expand access to our own American energy resources.

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