

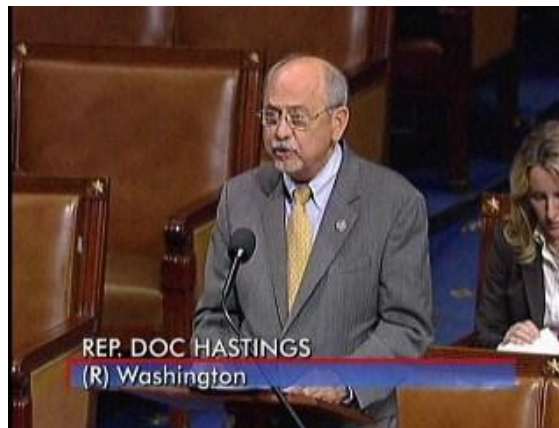


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Chairman Hastings: President Obama's War on Coal is Real

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) delivered the following opening statement on the House floor today in support of H.R. 3409, the *Stop the War on Coal Act*:



[Click here to watch the video](#)

“Mr. Chairman,

In his 2008 campaign, President Obama plainly declared the policies he supports would bankrupt American coal production.

Since taking office, the Obama Administration has waged a multi-front war on coal – on coal jobs, on the small businesses in the mining supply chain, and on the low-cost energy that millions of Americans rely upon.

Amazingly, the Obama Administration has repeatedly tried to deny they've launched a war on coal. Yet, facts are stubborn things.

Just this week, Alpha Natural Resources announced the closure of eight coal mines that will cost over 1,200 good-paying jobs. Aggressive regulations were specifically cited by the company for the closure of the mines.

New regulations imposed by the Obama EPA threaten to shut down the Navajo Generating Station, a coal-fired power plant in Arizona. This would cost hundreds of jobs and

eliminate millions of dollars in revenue for Navajo tribal economic development, education and basic services.

These lost jobs aren't random events – they are the direct result of the policies and actions of the Obama Administration – these are the outcomes of their regulatory war on coal.

For more than a year and a half, the Natural Resources Committee has been aggressively investigating one of the Obama Administration's most covert but outrageous fronts in this war: a decision by the Interior Department to rapidly rewrite a regulation governing coal mining near streams.

Within days of taking office, the Obama Administration simply threw out the Stream Buffer Zone rule that had undergone five years of environmental analysis and public review. They used a short-circuited process to hire a contractor to write this new regulation. When the news media revealed official analysis showing the new Obama regulation would cost 7,000 jobs and cause economic harm in 22 states, the Administration fired the contractor and charged ahead.

To date, the Committee's investigation has exposed gross mismanagement of the rulemaking process, potential political interference, and the widespread economic harm this regulation would cause.

The Interior Department refuses to comply with Congressional subpoenas to produce documents and information that would fully reveal how and why this regulation was being rewritten.

An interim report was issued today that details specific findings and information uncovered in this investigation. This report is available on the Committee's website at <http://naturalresources.house.gov>

It's not a matter of if the new Obama regulation will be imposed, but when. Television cameras overheard President Obama whispering to the Russian Prime Minister that he'll have more "flexibility" after the election. It doesn't take a canary in the coal mine to figure out the Interior Department's new Stream Buffer Zone regulation on coal is being held back and concealed until after the November election, when President Obama would have more 'flexibility' to unleash its job-destroying impacts.

That's why Congress must put a stop to this now. This new regulation must be halted.

Title I of today's bill, the Stop the War on Coal Act, is authored by Rep. Bill Johnson of Ohio and prohibits the Obama Administration from issuing this new regulation. It allows time to responsibly undertake an open, transparent rulemaking that fairly accounts for job and economic impacts.

President Obama's war on coal is real. The lost jobs are already happening and thousands more are at risk. Americans' energy costs are already too high, and the war on coal will drive them higher. I urge my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, and from all regions of the country, to support this bill and stop these red-tape attacks on American jobs and

American-made energy.”

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