



# Roll Call

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## **Hastings: Don't Overlook Energy's Potential**

By Rep. Doc Hastings

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Earlier this month, President Barack Obama spoke to a joint session of Congress about our country's job crisis. House Republicans are ready and willing to work with the president on common-sense policies to jump-start our economy, and it's encouraging to see the president focused on job creation.

However, I must question the ability of the president's plan to spend, borrow and tax our way to economic prosperity while simultaneously ignoring the job-creation opportunities that exist by responsibly developing our nation's natural resources.

During the president's jobs speech, there was not one single mention of American energy. Nearly 4,000 words and not a single one was "energy." To say this was a missed opportunity is an understatement. This glaring omission shows the president and his administration do not truly recognize and understand the incredible potential that exists through American energy production on federal lands.

Our abundant energy resources not only give us the ability to create millions of permanent, good-paying jobs that will increase our global economic competitiveness, but they will also help reduce the debt, lower energy prices and make our nation more secure at no cost to the taxpayers.

As the debate on job creation continues, economists at Wood Mackenzie recently released a poignant report on the job potential of America's energy resources. The report found that encouraging new American energy development would create more than 1 million new jobs by 2018 and 1.4 million jobs by 2030. These new jobs come with the added benefit of an increase of 10 million barrels of oil equivalent per day and more than \$800 billion in additional federal revenue. America can produce a significant amount of the energy that

our economy requires and consumers need while lessening our reliance on unstable foreign countries if we enact the right pro-growth American energy policies.

During a recent Natural Resources Committee hearing on American energy jobs, I offered 10 American energy production ideas that have the potential to create millions of jobs. The ideas include lifting the ban on new offshore drilling, allowing production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, streamlining the permitting process for onshore and offshore renewable energy projects, and allowing the use of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing on federal lands. It is through a comprehensive, all-of-the-above energy approach that we'll be able to create new jobs in a variety of sectors across the entire country.

North Dakota's oil and natural gas boom on private and state land is consistently used as an example of what the rest of the country could experience if not encumbered by the onerous regulations of the federal government. North Dakota's 3.3 percent jobless rate is the lowest in the country. From July 2010 to July 2011, the state experienced 5.25 percent job growth — more than doubling the second-best job-creating state in the union, Texas.

North Dakota's energy companies aren't just employing people at a faster rate than every other state. They are also paying them more. In the first quarter of 2011, North Dakota led the country with a 6.9 percent growth in personal income. If North Dakota can figure out how to turn its energy resources into a job-creating juggernaut, then there is no excuse for the federal government not to be able to accomplish the same thing.

As Washington, D.C., moves forward in the next few weeks and months to address both jobs and the deficit, I hope everyone will remember the role that increased energy production can play. Millions of new jobs, billions in revenue and increased national security are not things that should be taken lightly or ignored. I challenge the president not to let this moment go by without taking action to increase American energy production.

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