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**Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

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**Opening Statement of**  
**Chairman Doc Hastings**  
**At the Full Committee Markup on**  
**H.R. 1192, H.R. 3973, H.R. 4043, H.R. 4381, H.R. 4382, H.R. 4383 and H.R. 4402**  
**Wednesday, May 16, 2012**

The price of gasoline has doubled since President Obama took office and Americans continue to feel the pain at the pump when they fill up their car or truck. For the last three and a half years, millions have remained unemployed and American families have been forced to do more with less.

Energy production on federal lands is one of our best opportunities for job creation and energy security, but time and again it's blocked and delayed by Obama Administration policies. Under the Obama Administration, from 2010 to 2011 federal oil production fell 14 percent and natural gas production fell 11 percent, while oil and natural gas production on state and private lands boomed.

Just yesterday North Dakota passed Alaska as the number two oil producing state in the nation. This is only possible because the private lands of North Dakota are booming with development and production while the federal lands in Alaska's NPRA have been held hostage by this Administration for years over a single permit for a bridge over a river.

Yesterday, the Department of the Interior produced another bogus report, much the like one produced in March 2011, which invented their own definition of inactive leases and flatly ignores the realities that exist for job-creators to produce energy on a lease. I would suggest that the Interior Department spend more time making their regulatory process more efficient to foster job creation, rather than on writing reports that try to draw attention away from the Obama Administration's failed energy policies.

The bills that we are considering today look to establish a common sense all-of-the-above American energy plan that streamlines permitting, reduces timelines and promotes job creation and American energy production. Increased American energy production will help lower gasoline prices by reducing our dependence on Middle Eastern oil and the volatile global oil market.

Speeding development and permitting will reduce costs for renewable energy and provide additional certainty in the permitting process. Legislation to promote domestic mining could mean that we wean ourselves off our complete dependence on China for rare earth minerals in 5 years instead of the 10-15 it is projected to start new mines.

Unfortunately, Indian lands are home to some of America's highest unemployment rates, yet they also harness the greatest job creation potential in energy development. Due to restrictive and cumbersome federal regulations, many tribes have been unable to take advantage of their own energy resources. The Native American Energy Act, which is under consideration today, gives tribes more control over their land by streamlining government barriers to energy production.

Federal and Indian lands offer an enormous potential for job creation and economic growth if the federal regulatory process was more easily navigable and rid of bureaucratic red tape. These bills are yet another step forward for House Republicans' American Energy Initiative that is an ongoing effort to ease rising gasoline prices, grow our economy and put Americans back to work using American energy resources.