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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

Opening Statement of
Subcommittee Chairman Doug Lamborn
Committee on Natural Resources
On Wednesday, May 22, 2013
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources Legislative Hearing on
H.R. 1964, H.R. 1965, H.R. 1394, and H.R. 555

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I'd like to thank our witnesses for being with us today. Today we are meeting on four bills to expand American energy production, create American jobs, cut through bureaucratic red tape and streamline a regulatory process that is forcing companies to avoid federal land for energy production in search of state and private land more amenable to energy development.

We will be hearing witness testimony on four bills. H.R. 555, the "*BLM Live Internet Auctions Act*," would bring BLM leasing into the 21st century by amending the Mineral Leasing Act to allow BLM to conduct lease sales through the internet.

H.R. 1964, the "*National Petroleum Reserve Alaska Access Act*" would open up the NPR-A to oil and natural gas development, ensure competitive leasing occurs, and nullify the Interior Department's Integrated Activity Plan and Environmental Impact Statement that would close off nearly 50% of the reserve and virtually denies access to a conservative estimate of over 2.7 billion barrels of oil.

H.R. 1394, the "*Planning for American Energy Act of 2013*" would require the Secretary of the Interior to establish an all-of-the above 4-year energy production plan to ensure that the United States uses federal lands to provide for our energy needs in the future.

Additionally we will hear testimony on legislation I have introduced, H.R. 1965, the "*Federal Lands Jobs and Energy Security Act*." By focusing on energy permitting and leasing, this legislation would streamline the onshore permitting process, provide for onshore leasing certainty, and allow oil shale development to move forward unencumbered by changing regulations and a fluctuating royalty rate.

The Obama Administration has repeatedly claimed it is doing all they can to facilitate conventional and renewable energy development. However their actions show otherwise.

The Administration has repeatedly canceled lease sales, added additional lease terms and stipulations after a lease has been issued, and taken months, if not years to issue APDs. We all remember one of the first actions of this Administration was to revoke dozens of leases after they had been fairly won and issued. Further, the Administration has made lease terms for oil shale development so adverse to development they have received a minimal number of bids on the oil shale lease sales they have held.

While states are issuing APDs within 30 days, or even a week, the federal government takes 270 days to issue an APD. HR 1965 would set firm timelines for the government to issue APDs and require lawsuits to be filed in a timely fashion so energy projects are not held up indefinitely. It would also direct resources to field offices so they are able to efficiently process renewable and conventional energy projects permits on federal lands.

Additionally, this legislation would require the government to lease at least 25% of the acreage nominated for leasing. While the Administration claims they are moving forward with a robust competitive leasing program, the facts tell us the opposite. In 2010 in my home state of Colorado, 220,000 acres were identified and proposed for leasing, yet the Administration chose to lease just over 5,000 – or 4% of those lands. In New Mexico, 15,500 out of 118,781 acres nominated were leased, and in Arizona there has not been a single lease sale, despite interest in nearly 50,000 acres.

Finally, my legislation would ensure regulatory certainty to allow oil shale development to progress. In the United States we are blessed with some of the largest, richest deposits of oil shale in the entire world. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the Western United States may hold more than 1.5 trillion barrels of oil – six times Saudi Arabia's proven resources. However this Administration has changed oil shale lease terms, making them so restrictive there is little industry interest in this rich American resource. The Administration has recently released redrafted regulations for oil shale development, yet these restrictive proposed regulations would continue to lock up American resources from development, leaving this tremendous potential resource virtually untouched.

Each of the bills we will hear testimony on will take great steps forward to promote domestic energy security, economic development and job creation. Combined, these bills reduce our dependence on foreign imports, generate revenue for the American treasury, and allow us to benefit from our country's resources. I'd like to thank the witnesses for taking the time to testify for us today and I look forward to hearing their testimony.