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Ranking Member Hastings Proposes Creation of Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Outlines Proposal in Letter to Republican Conference of the 112th Congress

WASHINGTON D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04) sent the following [letter](#) to Members of the House Republican Conference of the 112th Congress proposing the creation of an Energy and Natural Resources Committee by consolidating the energy portfolio from the Energy and Commerce Committee to the Natural Resources Committee. In asking his colleagues to consider the proposal, Hastings states that the “bold change” would “advance our Republican all-of-the-above approach to energy, level the power of Committees and create more opportunities for more Members.”

Full text of letter:

To the Republican Conference of the 112th Congress:

As Republicans transition to the Majority, we are presented with the unique opportunity to make bold changes in how the House operates and serves the American people.

A proposal that deserves our consideration is consolidating the energy jurisdiction that is currently split between the Natural Resources Committee and the Energy & Commerce Committee into an “Energy and Natural Resources Committee.”

Consolidating the energy portfolio from the Commerce Committee into the Natural Resources Committee achieves several positive purposes:

1. It advances our Republican all-of-the-above approach to energy.

The Natural Resources Committee currently oversees all energy development on federal lands and offshore: oil, natural gas, hydropower, wind, solar, coal, geothermal, uranium, minerals...everything. The Commerce Committee currently oversees the Department of Energy and general energy policy as it relates to oil, natural gas, nuclear, renewable, etc. Energy is currently divided in two halves – and this proposal would marry together our nation’s broad energy policy with the vast majority of America’s actual energy resources that are on our federal lands and offshore.

Republicans believe in an all-of-the-above approach to energy – and the American people support this approach because they understand it will create new American

jobs, will lessen our dependence on foreign sources of energy from hostile regions of the world, and because it is aimed at keeping energy prices affordable rather than taxing energy and raising prices. What more common sense way to advance this key piece of our agenda, and this priority for the American people, than to make this bold change to create an all-of-the-above “Energy and Natural Resources Committee.”

2. It levels the power of Committees – and creates more opportunities for more Members.

The Energy & Commerce Committee controls health care, interstate commerce, technology, telecommunications, the FDA, consumer protection and energy. In terms of legislative power, it is a Goliath. This is the Committee that spawned both Obamacare and the Democrats’ cap-and-trade national energy tax.

As Republicans seek to empower Committees in the 112th Congress, shifting the entire energy jurisdiction of the Commerce Committee to the Natural Resources Committee would level the power of Committees. This proposal would allow one Committee to focus on health care and Obamacare... and one Committee to focus on energy, our all-of-the-above approach, and the Administration’s policies that hurt energy jobs and American-made energy production. This will enable both Committees to be more effective and achieve real oversight and legislative accomplishments. It also aligns jurisdiction with the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee – a simplification that advances our ability to ultimately achieve legislative successes.

Leveling the power of Committees creates more opportunities for more Members to be engaged in the important issues affecting Americans’ lives. A more equitable division of power would allow more Members to serve on Committees overseeing the top priorities of our Conference and the nation.

In the coming years and decades, the issues of energy, health care and technology will only grow in importance to Americans’ lives, our nation’s economy and the attention of Congress. This is our one-time chance as Republicans to break down the Democrat-built power structure in the House to better serve not just all the Members of our Conference and the House, but more importantly, the American people. This is the time to make the choice of long-term change or simply perpetuating the vestiges of decades of Democrat control of the House.

It is not a new concept or proposal to consolidate energy jurisdiction into the Natural Resources Committee – it has been pondered by many for quite some time. But this is the moment that a decision can be made to align the structure of the House towards creating a cohesive and comprehensive national energy policy that has the capability to spur real, long-term job creation and economic growth. Energy deserves the concentrated attention of a Committee with full jurisdiction over such a sweeping issue.

Now is the time to show the American people that we are serious about reforming how Washington D.C. does business. I ask that you give this proposal your serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Doc Hastings

[Click here for a copy of the letter.](#)

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