



November 20, 2013

United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), a national association with 70 chapters representing 22,000 merit shop construction and construction-related firms, I am writing to express support for House Resolutions 1965, 2728 and 1900, which are under consideration this week as part of the majority's ongoing American Energy Initiative. Each bill is an important step toward reducing regulatory barriers that hinder job creation, limit economic growth and lock up domestic resources while increasing our dependence on foreign energy supplies.

The commercial construction industry maintains a unique interest in energy policy, as it represents not only a large-scale energy consumer, but also a key facilitator of domestic energy exploration, production and transportation. Furthermore, despite a jobless rate of 9 percent, construction employs nearly six million Americans who bear the brunt of increasingly exorbitant fuel prices at the pump.

The *Federal Lands Jobs and Energy Security Act* (H.R. 1965) would boost onshore production by reforming the federal leasing and permitting process for oil, gas, and alternative energy sources, while encouraging development of lands currently blocked or otherwise restricted by the Obama administration, such as shale formations, petroleum reserves and tribal lands. The *Protecting States' Rights to Promote American Energy Security Act* (H.R. 2728) would recognize state authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing activities without being duplicated or usurped at the federal level. Finally, The *Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act* (H.R. 1900) would empower the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to enforce natural gas pipeline permitting deadlines, expediting a process currently mired in delays and ultimately providing increased capacity to our country's strapped energy infrastructure.

A 2012 report by IHS Global Insight estimated that more than 1.7 million jobs could be attributed to unconventional oil and gas activity, with upwards of 100,000 in the construction industry alone. The report goes on to project upwards of three million such jobs by the year 2020. By encouraging further development of these resources among the states and within federal lands, these numbers can only grow. Meanwhile various long-delayed pipeline projects promise thousands of construction jobs, and will be increasingly necessary to transport oil and gas from shale plays across the country and throughout North America.

ABC supports a comprehensive energy strategy that utilizes the abundant American supply of fossil fuels to allow renewable alternatives such as wind, solar and other "green" technologies time to mature into viable energy sources. The ongoing American Energy Initiative reflects this principle, and we urge you to support House Resolutions 1965, 2728 and 1900.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Burr
Vice President, Federal Affairs