



In Case You Missed It

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN DOC HASTINGS

“The United States has the natural resources, technology, ingenuity and talent to significantly decrease our dependence on foreign oil by producing our own energy. The question isn’t can American do it, but rather, if we are willing to do it. The turmoil in the Middle East must serve as a wake-up call to this administration to put an end to its policies that block American energy production.”

THE DAILY CALLER

[Egyptian political unrest highlights need for more American energy production](#)

Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings

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Last week, the price of oil broke \$100 a barrel for the first time since 2008, due in part to the political unrest in Egypt. As gasoline prices rise, Americans are reminded that the consequences of this unrest are not confined to Egypt. The impacts will be felt in our country as well.

The volatility in the Middle East is a stark reminder that our economy and national security are linked to unstable regions of the world and will continue to be as long as the United States remains dependent on foreign energy. America can no longer afford to overlook the national security implications that come from not developing our energy resources here at home. Adopting a true all-of-the-above energy approach will lead us to greater energy independence and a stronger economy.

According to the Energy Information Administration, Egypt exports approximately 10,000 barrels of oil a day to the U.S. — only a fraction of total U.S. imports. However, the potential shutdown of the Egyptian-controlled Suez Canal and pipeline, which transfers four million barrels of oil and petroleum products a day, could have dramatic impacts on our economy and the price of oil. More ominously, the potential economic impacts could increase if the events in Egypt spread to other Middle Eastern countries like Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Libya, which control a significant share of the world’s oil supply.

There is no reason to continue our dangerous dependence on foreign oil when we can develop and produce our own resources. Unfortunately, the Obama administration is choosing to restrict access to America’s resources and deepen our dependence on foreign sources. The U.S. has abundant oil and natural gas reserves, both onshore and offshore, that the administration is keeping under lock and key.

At virtually every opportunity, this administration has slow-walked American energy production. It has withdrawn oil and gas leases in the intermountain West, imposed a real and now *de facto* moratorium on drilling in the Gulf, placed huge portions of the Outer Continental Shelf off-limits to new offshore drilling, and proposed billions in higher taxes on American energy.

There need to be smart, effective reforms to ensure that U.S. offshore drilling is the safest in the world. But shutting down energy production here in the U.S. only leaves us at the mercy of unstable and hostile foreign countries.

Just over two years ago, when gasoline prices skyrocketed to over four dollars a gallon, the American people responded by demanding increased American energy production.

Congress and President Bush heard the message loud and clear, lifting both the congressional and presidential moratoria on offshore drilling. But this progress came to a screeching halt when President Obama took office. The American people should not have to wait for the Obama administration to decide if four-dollar-per-gallon gasoline is expensive enough to act.

High gasoline prices hurt American families and businesses. The Associated Press recently reported that for every penny the price of gas goes up, it costs consumers overall an additional \$4 million. And that happens every day there is a price increase. This means that even a small price hike can have a dramatic impact on our economy. This is the last thing we can afford when our nation is already coping with near-double-digit unemployment.

There are those who argue that we can't drill our way out of this problem. I wholeheartedly agree that drilling is not the only answer and that we need to develop a robust all-of-the-above energy program that includes the development of alternative energy sources such as nuclear, hydropower, wind and solar.

However, oil and natural gas are an integral part of our daily lives. Their use is not only for fuel and transportation. They are also necessary for other consumer products such as plastics, cell phones, computers, tires, fertilizer and so much more.

It is foolish for the United States of America to continue importing millions of barrels of oil a day instead of using our own resources. Utilizing our own energy would not only make us less vulnerable to world events that are out of our control, but would create more American jobs, increase our economic competitiveness, stop the transfer of wealth to foreign nations and strengthen the U.S. dollar.

It is time to cut the ties that are putting our present and future economic and national security at risk. The United States has the natural resources, technology, ingenuity and talent to significantly decrease our dependence on foreign oil by producing our own energy. The question isn't can American do it, but rather, if we are willing to do it. The turmoil in the Middle East must serve as a wake-up call to this administration to put an end to its policies that block American energy production.

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