

# RURAL AMERICA SOLUTIONS GROUP



Co-Chairs: Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK) Rep. Sam Graves (R-MO) Rep. Doc Hastings (R-WA)

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## Democrats' National Energy Tax Will Devastate Rural America

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, the Rural America Solutions Group held a press conference on Capitol Hill to highlight the negative impacts of the Democrats' national energy tax legislation on rural America. This national energy tax, under consideration this week by the Energy and Commerce Committee, would disproportionately spike rural American energy bills, harm agriculture production and threaten small businesses. Co-Chairs of the Group delivered the following statements:

"This bill is nearly 1,000 pages long and mentions agriculture six times and not in any substantive way. Yet, the impact of this bill on production agriculture and rural economies will be huge. Farmers and ranchers are staring at huge costs without any offsets. Rural Americans are staring at huge energy costs without any relief. If you like being cool in the summer, you're going to be affected. If you like being warm in the winter, you're going to be affected. If you own a farm, you're going to be affected. If you want to run a small business or work in one, you're going to be affected. If you want to go anywhere, you're going to be affected. This is going to affect all of us. Congress needs to take a good, long look at this bill and its impact on Americans all across the country." – **House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Frank Lucas (R-OK)**

"I'm a product of Rural America, I was born and raised on a corn and soybean farm in Missouri and I'm still living there today. Nothing scares me more than having higher energy taxes placed on my community. I am also worried about small businesses that will be hurt by an energy tax. According to the SBA, 52% of small firms are home-based. Flipping on a light switch at home or turning up the thermostat will only hurt our small business owners further. These job creators are doing everything they can to stay afloat during this recession, let's not cause them further heartache." – **House Small Business Committee Ranking Member Sam Graves (R-MO)**

"Democrats in Congress are pushing a high-priced gourmet energy bill featuring a new national energy tax that will spike rural Americans' energy costs. Rural Americans want cleaner air, cleaner water and a better environment, but they can't afford this bill. There is a better way forward. Republicans support an all-of-the-above energy plan that includes renewable sources such as wind, solar, hydropower, biomass and greater use of nuclear power, along with creating more American-made oil and natural gas. Under this plan, we'll create new rural energy jobs and improve America's use of renewable energy - without

destroying our economy or sending jobs overseas to countries with inferior environmental standards.” – **House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (R-WA)**

Families and businesses in rural America will be hardest hit by the Democrats’ national energy tax. Consider the following:

- Americans in rural areas must travel farther for routine errands—25 percent more miles than urban households according to the most recent Federal Highway data.
- Rural households spend 58% more on fuel than urban residents as a percentage of their income.
- An early analysis by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association estimates that the monthly residential electricity bills in 25 states will increase 15 to 28 percent for every \$20/ton of carbon dioxide allowances.
- On average, 65 percent of farmers’ variable input costs are fuel, electricity, fertilizer, and chemicals. Even a small increase in the operating costs for our producers will be devastating to American agriculture.
- Estimates vary, but experts predict that under the new energy tax proposals, energy prices will increase anywhere between 15 percent and 125 percent.
- Higher energy prices ripple throughout the economy, producers will pay more for seed, equipment, machinery, steel, and other supplies needed for their agriculture operations.
- The Rural America Solutions Group is comprised of House Republicans dedicated to addressing the unique challenges rural communities face and focusing on solutions that create jobs and economic opportunities.

Members of the Rural America Solutions Group include:

Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK) – Co-Chair

Rep. Sam Graves (R-MO) – Co-Chair

Rep. Doc Hastings (R-WA) – Co-Chair

Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT)

Rep. Henry Brown (R-SC)

Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT)

Rep. Mike Conaway (R-TX)

Rep. Steve King (R-IA)

Rep. Tom Latham (R-IA)

Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-MO)

Rep. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY)

Rep. Tom McClintock (R-CA)

Rep. Adam Putnam (R-FL)

Rep. George Radonovich (R-CA)

Rep. Phil Roe (R-TN)

Rep. Adrian Smith (R-NE)

Note – Video footage of today’s press conference will be posted on [www.youtube.com/RuralSolutionsGroup](http://www.youtube.com/RuralSolutionsGroup) by the end of the day.

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