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## **Hastings Opening Statement at Full Committee Hearing on CLEAR Act (H.R. 3534)**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04) delivered the following opening statement at today’s Full Committee hearing on *The Consolidated Land, Energy, and Aquatic Resources Act of 2009 (H.R. 3534)*:

“The specific topic of today’s hearing is H.R. 3534. Under the schedule set by Chairman Rahall, Secretary Salazar is just the first of many witnesses that the Committee will hear from over the course of two days. This legislation needs very careful and thorough review. At a time our nation should be focused on creating jobs and producing more energy here in America, this legislation erects more roadblocks to energy job creation and production. For example, it creates a new bureaucracy, it raises the costs of producing energy with higher and new fees, and it potentially adds years of delay to energy development both offshore and on federal lands. In my view, all of this will cost us the high-wage energy jobs that America’s economy desperately needs. These roadblocks impact not just oil and natural gas, but also the production of wind and solar renewable energy.

It is difficult to discern how this legislation will result in more domestic energy production. Just as the Waxman-Markey National Energy Tax will drive up the cost of energy in America and send jobs overseas to foreign nations, this bill too fails to produce more energy and costs us jobs.

The Republican “all-of-the-above” energy plan stands in stark contrast to the Democrat agenda to erect new obstacles and levy high taxes on more energy development in the United States. That bill, H.R. 2846, was introduced in June and its consideration is under the jurisdiction of this Committee. This “all-of-the-above” plan has four main objectives:

- Increase production of American-made energy in an environmentally responsible and sound manner;
- Promote new, clean and renewable sources of energy such as nuclear, hydropower, clean-coal-technology, wind and solar energy;
- Encourage greater efficiency and conservation by extending tax incentives for energy efficiency and rewarding development of greater conservation techniques and new energy resources; and,
- Cut red-tape and reduce frivolous litigation.

While many in Washington, DC want to pick and choose which energy jobs to create, the Republican “all-of-the-above” plan is focused on creating ALL of the energy jobs we can:

green jobs, solar jobs, wind jobs, drilling jobs, nuclear jobs, clean-coal jobs. With unemployment reaching almost 10 percent nationally, our nation can't afford to only pursue green jobs, we need all the jobs we can get.

In addition to questions about Chairman Rahall's legislation, I know many of my colleagues, likely on both sides of the aisle, will have additional matters they wish to raise with Secretary. There is a great deal that has happened during the first eight months of this new Administration and today's hearing is an opportunity to talk directly with the Secretary about matters under his jurisdiction at the Interior Department.

For example, there is great concern over the six-month delay that has been imposed on development of the new five-year leasing program for offshore drilling. Last year, President Bush and Congress lifted the moratoria on offshore-drilling. Yet, in spite of the broad, bipartisan support across the country for opening additional areas for drilling, among the first acts of this Administration was to put such plans on hold for six-months. Next Monday marks the end of this six-month period and I hope the Secretary will detail for us the plans for moving forward promptly with the five-year offshore leasing program.

At the same time that new offshore leases were being delayed, other actions were taken by the Department that also harmed the production of more American energy and creation of jobs. Oil and gas leases were suddenly withdrawn in Utah, oil shale research that would create new jobs in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah were delayed, and \$31 billion in higher taxes on oil and gas production were proposed in the President's budget. I know there are Members of the Committee who wish to try and understand how the spoken words of this Administration in support of more energy production match-up against their actions to block and delay it.

There is also the \$3 billion in economic stimulus funds that the Department received. I'm sure many on the Committee are interested in hearing how this large sum of money is being spent and how many specific jobs have been created.

So, in the interest of allowing as much time as possible to hear from the Secretary, I'll conclude my remarks by again thanking the Chairman for holding this hearing and the Secretary for appearing before us."

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