



Committee on Natural Resources U.S. House of Representatives

Chairman Doc Hastings

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Witnesses Highlight the Economic and Energy Benefits of Coal Mining in America

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held an [oversight hearing](#) on “*Mining in America: Powder River Basin Coal Mining the Benefits and Challenges.*” This hearing examined the job, energy, and economic benefits related to the development of our natural resources in the Powder River Basin in Wyoming and Montana that provides forty percent of the coal mined in America. Coal is an important natural energy resource that provides America with reliable and affordable energy along with countless direct and indirect jobs.

“American coal, mined by American workers, generating revenue for the American treasury can and should be a part of their solution for the future. And yet, it appears to me that every opportunity for a coal miner to work is under attack from the Obama Administration. Coal has played an important role in the economic development and vitality of the United States – driving the industrialization of the western world – providing abundant, reliable and affordable energy. The Powder River Basin is that American story; it has and can continue to have the potential to do so well into the future,” [said Subcommittee Chairman Doug Lamborn \(CO-05\).](#)

Witnesses, who testified before the Subcommittee on the importance of coal production, spoke about the job, economic, and energy benefits that coal brings to America.

“The biggest challenge we face is the attack by the current administration on the life blood of our community, our state and every family in this country that will have to make the difficult decision of feeding their family or paying exorbitant electricity charges because coal is no longer part of our national energy policy. Mining coal is part of the custom and culture of Wyoming, with the first mines opening in 1876 and having continuous production since that time. Multiple generations of Wyoming citizens have worked in the mines, paid for a college education or purchased a home with their wages from mining jobs. Coal miners are part of our state’s identity, and under the current administration, this way of life remains under attack, not only in Wyoming, but also in other states.” – [Dan Coolidge, Chairman of the Campbell County Commissioners in Wyoming](#)

“Today, the Crow Nation desires to develop its vast coal resources not only for itself, but for our energy partners, the surrounding communities and for the United States. By developing Crow coal via domestic markets, export terminals and coal conversion, we firmly believe we can help ourselves while simultaneously meeting national energy goals -- achieving energy independence, securing a domestic supply of valuable energy, and reducing the country's

dependence on foreign oil. My administration has been very busy in working to develop our coal resources and to remove obstacles to successful development. I simply desire for the Crow Nation to become self-sufficient by developing its own coal resources and to provide basic services for the health, hopes and future of the Crow people.” – [Darrin Old Coyote, Chairman of the Crow Nation](#)

“Coal is the world’s most plentiful fossil fuel and is the most abundant fossil fuel produced in the United States. Over 90 percent of the coal consumed in the United States is used to generate electricity. Coal is also used as a basic industry source for making steel, cement and paper, and is used in other industries as well...Most recently, the President’s Climate Change Action Plan that he outlined in a speech at Georgetown University on June 25 includes reducing carbon dioxide emissions at existing coal-fired power plants as well as at new plants. According to his action plan, ‘President Obama is issuing a Presidential Memorandum directing the Environmental Protection Agency to work expeditiously to complete carbon pollution standards for both new and existing power plants. Many have indicated that these policies represent a ‘war on coal.’” – [Mary Hutzler, Senior Fellow at the Institute for Energy Research](#)

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