

In Today's Economy, America Can't Afford S. 22

Senate Lands Bill Costs \$10 Billion, Pushes Energy Jobs for Americans Overseas

Dear Colleague:

With our nation's economy struggling and hundreds of thousands of Americans losing their jobs, I urge you to oppose S. 22, the Senate's Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009.

There are many parts of this super-sized bill that I believe have real merit. Yet the Senate has assembled a package that combines some good ideas with costly policies that have bipartisan opposition and will further harm our economy.

S.22 would block the production of new American-made energy that would create new, high-paying jobs for Americans. Over and over again, provisions in this legislation would block lands from energy exploration or production. Our economy cannot afford an approach to energy that pushes production jobs overseas and increasingly puts America's economy at the mercy of foreign energy producers.

S. 22 restricts access for hunting, fishing and vehicle recreation on millions of acres...land that belongs to the American people that they should be able access and enjoy.

S. 22 limits the ability of local law enforcement, Border Patrol and Homeland Security to secure our borders by imposing land use designations that would eliminate vehicle use.

S. 22 puts private property rights at risk.

S. 22 would make federal criminals out of amateur collectors, even children, who happen to find fossils on public lands.

S. 22 is a \$10 billion bill that America can't afford right now. In fact, the National Park Service estimates that we have \$9 billion in backlogged maintenance projects on existing lands. Now isn't the time to acquire vast amounts of new land when we can't even afford to maintain our existing National Parks.

At a time when Americans' take-home-pay is shrinking and thousands are losing their jobs, this is a bill we simply can't afford.

Let the House consider this bill in a manner that allows us to fix the bad choices made in the Senate and protects American jobs and our economy.

Sincerely,

Doc Hastings
Ranking Member
House Natural Resources Committee