

The Honorable Doc Hastings
Chairman
House Natural Resources Committee
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

April 17, 2013

Dear Chairman Hastings:

Subject: Preservation of a reliable supply of domestic helium

In addition to your support and visits to our facility in the past, today we write in appreciation of your attention and leadership on the important issue of preserving a reliable supply of domestic helium. As you have stated, a stable supply of helium is vital to our Nation's economy and our national security as it is used broadly in everything from life-saving medical devices to high-end electronics manufacturing and national defense efforts. Without congressional action, the Federal Helium Reserve will cease operations this Fall, exacerbating the current global helium shortage. Such a result would increase uncertainty and costs for the Nation's researchers, manufacturers, and patients that depend on a stable supply of helium. Of those manufacturers, we here at REC Silicon in Moses Lake, where we employ more than 500 people, would be one of those expected to feel the impacts of that uncertainty and increased cost almost immediately because of helium's use in our production process.

Therefore, we support your legislation-H.R. 527, The Responsible Helium Administration and Stewardship Act-which will extend the operation of the Federal Helium Reserve while making important reforms to the federal helium program. In particular, provisions that provide for more access to federal helium promote greater competition in the marketplace to service the needs of end-users and provide the highest return on a federal resource for U.S. taxpayers. Additionally, a more stable and transparent market price for federal helium can incentivize parties to develop new sources of domestic helium as the Federal Helium Reserve is drawn down.

As your legislation is considered by the full U.S. House of Representatives, we look forward to working with you to maintain and strengthen the reforms in H.R. 527. Once again, we commend you for your leadership on this issue and look forward to working with you to ensure a stable supply of helium in the future.

If you have further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 509.793.9037.

Sincerely,



Christopher Bowes
Director of Global Supply Chain/Public Affairs/IS/IT