

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPUBLICANS

CONGRESSMAN DOC HASTINGS, RANKING MEMBER

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Hastings Disapproves of Interior Department's Settlement of 'Categorical Exclusions' Lawsuit

WASHINGTON D.C. – House Natural Resource Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04) released the following statement after learning of the out of court settlement agreed to by the Bureau of Land Management regarding the use of “categorical exclusions” for new oil and gas leases as defined by Section 390 in the Energy Policy Act (EPA) of 2005. Hastings had previously sent a [letter](#) to the Interior Department warning against the use of an “extraordinary circumstance” litmus test when the law clearly instructs the use of a “categorical exclusion.”

“This Administration is not above the laws passed by Congress and nowhere in EPA does it mention an ‘extraordinary circumstance’ caveat necessary in order for a ‘categorical exclusions’ to be used. This settlement flies directly in the face of the letter and spirit of one of the most successful provisions of the 2005 energy bill. Not only will this decision cost Americans’ jobs and cheaper domestic energy, but it will most surely be challenged in court. It’s unfortunate that the anti-energy policies of this Administration have extended all the way to circumventing good laws that are currently on the books and were agreed to in a bipartisan manner.”

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