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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

Opening Statement
Of
Representative Doc Hastings
Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources

On Wednesday, September 9, 2009, at 10:00 a.m
1334 Longworth House Office Building
Before the legislative hearing on H.R. 2227,
"The American Conservation and Clean Energy Independence Act."

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TODD YOUNG
REPUBLICAN CHIEF OF STAFF

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am thankful that this Subcommittee is finally holding a hearing on a bill that would increase energy production on our Outer Continental Shelf. However, I find it troubling that despite being invited by the Majority, there will be no witness from the Department of Interior here today to answer questions and clarify the Administration's position on expanded offshore drilling. From their actions so far we can only guess that this Administration strongly opposes additional offshore drilling, but we won't be able to hear from them today. This is especially disappointing considering that Secretary Salazar recently stated that if invited he would be honored to testify before this Committee.

This hearing is particularly timely considering the recent news which demonstrates why it's important for the U.S. to move forward with additional leasing in our Nation's OCS.

Two weeks ago it was reported that the Obama administration was planning to loan \$2 billion to the Brazilian government-run oil company for the development of deepwater oil and gas in the Atlantic Ocean. Since Brazil is an energy independent nation, the oil developed in the OCS off Brazil will go onto the world market, much of that oil very likely coming to America.

Last week we learned that a company "found" nearly 3 billion barrels of oil within a domestic lease in the Gulf of Mexico OCS -. This new discovery represents a nearly 4% increase in the resources which MMS estimates to be available in the US OCS. This single find could increase the production from the Gulf of Mexico by as much as 15%.

It makes me wonder Mr. Chairman ---Why are we spending billions of American taxpayer dollars to create government jobs in Brazil, when there are private and publically traded companies begging to give the American taxpayer billions of dollars to open new regions of the US OCS for exploration and development, creating high paying family wage American jobs.

It has been more than a year since the Bush Administration initiated the development of a new 5 year OCS plan for 2010-2015. Unfortunately, that draft plan was delayed almost immediately after President Obama took office. Meanwhile there has been no action by the Obama administration to conduct any seismic or environmental work to prepare for leases in the former

moratoria areas. Such inaction means that wind, and oil and gas development in the US OCS is set further delayed.

Energy policy is about choices and this administration has made the choice not to promote the most economic and energy rich forms of domestic energy resources, including oil and gas, energy resources that generate the most revenue for the American Taxpayer, in favor of Secretary Salazar's plan to install more than 300 thousand 3 ¼ megawatt wind turbines spread over the 1,800 miles of Atlantic coastline—or about 172 turbines per mile of coastline.

In contrast, Republicans have chosen to support American energy production through an “all-of-the-above” energy plan. While we support the development of wind energy on the OCS we also support oil and gas development. America doesn't need just one choice on energy we need access to all the domestic energy resources we can develop.

This is why the bill before the committee today falls short of the ultimate goal.

The Republican American Energy Act which is also pending before this Committee would clean up the environment, lower energy costs, and create more American jobs than the bill before us today. The American Energy Act 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.

The Republican choice to promote an “All of the Above” energy legislation is in stark contrast to the Democrat agenda, which injects new taxes, new obstacles, and fundamentally hinders domestic energy development. For example:

- In California, Democrats are working to limit solar energy development to protect desert land at prime solar sites;
- In Wyoming, land preservation and special species are stopping wind and unconventional gas development; and,
- In the Atlantic, the Chairman of the Democratic Party with the acquiescence of the Secretary of Interior has stopped offshore oil and gas development.

America needs energy development and America needs jobs. While today's bill will promote some energy development and some new jobs, it is only one piece of the puzzle. America needs an “All-of-the-Above” energy policy to develop **ALL** our energy resources, and create **ALL** the jobs we can.

Mr. Chairman Republicans stand ready to help you promote increased domestic energy development. Hopefully this hearing will be the first step from this Committee in an effort to promote new Domestic energy production rather than creating new obstacles and imposing new taxes.