

Opening Statement of Congressman Ralph M. Hall  
Joint Hearing of the Subcommittees on Energy and Environment and Energy and Air  
Quality  
“Perspectives on Climate Change”  
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Today we are witnessing an all-out assault on all forms of fossil fuels and nuclear energy. We must be energy conscious and be sensible enough to know that fossil fuels will continue to be the major source of energy in the near future. If we allow this attack on energy to go unanswered – and have it result in lessening our domestic reliance on fossil fuels – we will force a reliance on OPEC from a dangerous 60% to a recklessly dangerous and likely 80% of our total energy supply. Forcing a continued reliance on OPEC will make our energy markets more unstable and dismantle jobs for workers such as drillers, tool pushers, roughnecks and others who furnish the manpower necessary to continue the search and capture of various sources of energy. It would also establish OPEC countries as even more dominant than they are today. Abandoning America’s energy producers would result in the death of an energy industry – an industry that won World War II and continues to fuel our economic engine today. It could also result in the loss of a generation of young American men and women who would have to fight for energy when and if the OPEC nations abandon the USA by canceling all sales and casting their future with other than Americans.

We must press for energy self-reliance and continue to pursue technology to combat the threat of increased carbon dioxide. These two goals are interconnected. If we tap into American ingenuity, we not only unleash the power of our nation’s competitiveness, but we also find domestic solutions for our future that are affordable, reliable and clean.

Republicans in Congress have taken this pro-growth approach over the last several years. The Energy Policy Act of 2005, for instance, included numerous initiatives for greater energy efficiency and alternative energy research and development. In the coming weeks, I plan on introducing legislation that expands on many of these initiatives so that we can continue to develop innovative solutions to our domestic energy needs. I understand that Dr. Lomborg will be discussing the role of energy research and development and how this approach will cost a lot less than Kyoto-like policies, and yet could potentially have a much greater impact on our climate. These are the types of solutions our country needs—solutions that create jobs, foster American innovation, and allow our country to become more energy independent.

The legislation that the Congressional leadership is advocating brings about Kyoto-like policies that will cost our nation a lot of money and won’t stop global warming in the future. Moreover, it is clear that other countries who are major polluters are not willing to help offset the giant cost entailed in this type of legislation. You can bring in testimony of expert after expert – all of whom can say that global warming is a threat to world health – but not one of them will discuss the cost of their

recommendations and the lack of the benefit gained at that cost. Yes, the cost to our taxpayers must be part of the discussion.

Finally, the American people will not guess today what mother nature will do a hundred or a thousand years from now – and will not be cajoled, frightened, bullied into, nor led into, a dangerous world that envisions us without a reliable energy supply. It is not going to happen because it can't happen. Working Americans will not tolerate shipping our jobs to China – one of the world's worst polluters. We should not abandon our obligation to all Americans by allowing the renewed attack on energy by a handful of pro-Kyoto, self-styled experts who never mention the cost – a cost to be paid by us -- the American people, when China, Russia, Mexico, India and others offer more and more pollution and not one penny for the cleanup. This Congress will listen to Americans who realize that someone has to pay the costs.