



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Statement by Rep. Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.)

The Future of Fossil: Energy Technologies Leading the Way

Chairman Biggs: Good morning and welcome to today's joint Environment Subcommittee and Energy Subcommittee hearing on fossil energy technologies. I'd like to thank our witnesses for being here.

Today we will discuss cutting-edge fossil energy technologies that will both advance our nation's environmental interests as well as maintain American energy dominance.

Like it or not, power generated by fossil fuels is and will continue to be America's core source of base load electricity. Unfortunately, due to regulations and a media-generated negative public perception, the fossil fuel industry is under attack.

Moreover, these regulations result in more economic harm than environmental gain in the way of job loss and higher utility bills for hardworking Americans. Today's hearing will focus on technologies that, when commercialized, can both boost the economy and clean our air for generations to come.

The reality is that there is no reliable and affordable alternative to fossil fuel generated power. As a result, fossil fuels will continue to support economic and infrastructure development both here in the U.S. and abroad.

As we learned from our recent hearing on climate adaptation, a strong economy and reliable infrastructure is necessary to protect against potential environmental harm. Shuttering a coal power plant in Arizona will not mitigate the effects of sea level rise in California. That effort requires advanced building materials and a reliable grid—all things made possible by fossil fuels.

The question remains: how do we balance the apparent need for fossil fuels with the call for lowering the amount of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere? We do that by incentivizing the creation of technologies that capture the carbon before it leaves the power station and developing innovative ways to use that captured carbon for commercial purposes.

Those technologies, known as carbon capture, utilization and sequestration, or CCUS, present a win-win for America. Rather than be emitted into the atmosphere, CCUS gives us the opportunity to convert carbon dioxide into a useful commodity. Not only

do these technologies allow for the continued viability of the existing fleet of fossil fuel plants, but they create the prospect for new industry sectors altogether.

While the federal government certainly plays a role in foundational research in this area, the private sector is best situated to innovate and scale-up these technologies. One example we will hear more about today is the Wyoming Integrated Test Center, or ITC.

The ITC is a public-private partnership that has received no federal funds. Located at the coal-powered Basin Electric Power Plant outside Gillette, Wyoming, the facility is set up as a testing site for researchers to scale up technologies designed to convert carbon dioxide into commercially viable products like building materials and plastics.

Facilities like the ITC are why America is the leader in CCUS technology. As the production and demand for fossil fuels continue to grow worldwide, it is essential for Congress to continue to encourage innovation in this area.

Again, I want to thank the witnesses for being here today, and I look forward to learning more about the interesting work being done by the government as well as the private sector.

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