

COMMITTEE ON
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY**
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



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**Statement of Energy Subcommittee Chairman Cynthia Lummis (R-Wyo.)
Hearing on The Future of Coal: Utilizing America's Abundant Energy Resources**

Chairman Lummis: Good morning and welcome to this morning's hearing titled The Future of Coal: Utilizing America's Abundant Energy Resources.

Coal is of critical importance to the United States. Since the founding of our country, through Thomas Edison's construction of the world's first electric power plant in 1892, and continuing still today, coal has led the way in enabling the enormous improvements to Americans' health and well-being. It remains our leading source of affordable and reliable electricity, providing a foundation for our national and economic security while directly supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs and powering industrial facilities that produce the inexpensive goods we too often take for granted.

Rarely, however, has such a beneficial, life-improving resource upon which society depends been under such hostile attack.

Adding injury to insult, this attack is being led by our own President. In 2008, President Obama boasted on the campaign trail that his policies would "necessarily bankrupt" any company that wanted to build a coal-fired power plant.

Unfortunately, this is one campaign promise that the President appears determined to keep. Not only are his EPA power plant regulations effectively prohibiting new coal plants from being constructed, they are imposing massive costs on existing plants and forcing scores of shutdowns. For example, 288 coal units in 32 states cited current and pending EPA regulations as a factor contributing to their expected closure.

Senior members of the Obama Administration have readily acknowledged the negative impacts of these policies. For example, in 2011, then-DOE Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy Jim Wood estimated that up to EPA rules could force up to 70 gigawatts of coal offline, adding:

"Number one, electric rates are going to go up. Number two, whether or not construction jobs in the green industry are created, I think there are virtually no manufacturing jobs that are likely to be created from the replacement of coal. Three ... transmission grid stability is likely to emerge as a major issue, both because of the shutdowns and because of the intermittency of renewables."

EPA is just one agency leading the war on coal. On Tuesday, the House Natural Resources Committee discussed the Department of Interior's anti-coal regulations that would restrict coal mining activities and result in thousands of lost jobs in the coal mining industry.

Incredibly, the President is even attempting to limit the global use of coal by restricting international aid for it in developing countries, thus limiting access to the primary means through which those countries' citizens escape poverty.

Even if the President were successful in his quest to eliminate all U.S. coal-fired power plants, any potential reductions to projected global warming would more than be overtaken by global emissions growth. China continues to build a coal plant a week and global coal demand is projected to continue to grow significantly over the next half century, regardless of U.S. domestic policy.

The purpose of today's hearing—and the challenge before us in this Subcommittee—is to apply these regulatory, economic, and global realities to improve the focus and prioritization of DOE's coal related activities. To this end, I look forward to hearing more about the recently developed coal R&D roadmap and how it could help identify technology opportunities to increase efficiencies, reduce pollutants, minimize water consumption, and lower the cost of electricity.

I am also eager to examine in more detail the truly innovative research underway at the Western Resources Institute in Wyoming. WRI serves as a model of how to bring together public, private and academic stakeholders to advance development and use of abundant and affordable energy supplies.

Thank you, and I now yield to Ranking Member Swalwell for his opening statement.

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