



Activities Report Highlights Strong Oversight; Republican Efforts to Create Jobs, Cut Spending, Increase Domestic Energy Production

The Committee's first quarter Activities Report [Link], adopted by the Full Committee on Wednesday June 22, 2011, outlines a comprehensive list of Committee activities during the first five months of the 112th Congress:

Creating Jobs

SST Republicans have taken a broad approach to jobs creation, working to make America more competitive globally and promoting domestic energy production to ensure our economy has abundant affordable energy:

Legislation

- The Committee passed a bill to reauthorize the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs, both targeted [to help small businesses innovate](#) and create jobs.

Increasing Domestic Energy Production

- **Hydraulic fracturing:** SST Republicans have pushed to expose and eliminate [would like to say we did more than just criticize] flaws in a forthcoming EPA study on hydraulic fracturing, a critical process that allows producers to tap America's abundant reserves of natural gas. The EPA and the Administration will likely attempt to regulate this process and limit American natural gas production by claiming hydraulic fracturing poses a potential threat to human health.
 - All of the witnesses at a recent hearing on the topic conceded that there has never been a proven instance of drinking water contamination from hydraulic fracturing in over 50 years of practice.
 - Further, Republicans questioned the value of an EPA draft study on potential water contamination that ignores any attempt at risk assessment. Chairman Hall called the report "a waste of money."
- **Nuclear:** SST Republicans have detailed Administration efforts to undermine [nuclear waste management policy](#) by sitting on a safety report by technical experts on Yucca Mountain that overwhelmingly supports the site as a safe repository for nuclear waste for 500,000 years.
 - Almost \$15 billion has been spent on Yucca, and the Administration is attempting to terminate its application, without any scientific justification in support for its decision.
 - The extensive Committee review of documents found the Administration manipulated process and suppressed science in order to advance its pre-determined decision to shut down Yucca Mountain. In doing so, it violated key Presidential promises on scientific integrity, openness, and transparency
 - In order for America to expand its nuclear power infrastructure, waste storage must be improved, and should be based on science, not politics.
 - The Committee recognizes that nuclear energy must be safely generated and examined issues relating to nuclear energy risk management policy to ensure public health and safety is fully protected.
- **Research Prioritization:** Republicans have questioned the Administration's proposed budget increases for "clean technology" programs and relative prioritization of spending at DOE. In several budget hearings, SST Republicans have pointed to waste, duplication and mismanagement in several of these programs.

- **Fossil Fuels:** expanding domestic oil and gas production is critical to our economy and our energy security. The Outer Continental Shelf holds 85 billion barrels of technically recoverable oil (over half of which is in the Gulf of Mexico) and 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. SST Republicans held a [hearing](#) on R&D and technologies to better enable U.S. producers to pursue exploration and production in a safe and responsible manner.

Strong Oversight

- The SST Committee has held [20 hearings](#) and heard from 74 witnesses in the first quarter of the 112th Congress.
- With an eye toward weeding out duplicative and wasteful spending, the Committee has held important oversight hearings on issues ranging from the [processes behind climate science](#) to [earthquake risk reduction](#) to the Administration's misguided [promotion of "green jobs."](#)
- **Human Space Flight:** The Committee is very closely monitoring progress in the development of NASA's new space launch systems, and has already held 4 oversight hearings to review NASA's new direction. As NASA transitions from the retiring Space Shuttle program to begin developing the Multipurpose Crew Vehicle, and as the agency assumes a defined role in overseeing progress in commercial space capabilities, the SST Committee will continue close oversight.
- **Scientific Integrity:** SST Republicans have highlighted many instances where the Administration or international bodies who communicate science have acted inappropriately or contrary to the promises and specific guidelines on scientific integrity, openness, and transparency set forth by President Obama and senior Administration officials. The Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee and Committee leaders have sent multiple [letters and document requests](#) highlighting issues related to scientific integrity, waste, fraud, abuse, and transparency.

Cutting Spending

- In the 112th Congress, SST Republicans have cut or prevented over **\$723 million** in proposed spending.
- In the [first markup of the Congress](#), Committee Republicans successfully cut authorized spending at the FAA by **\$140 million**.
 - The bill returns the FAA R&D budget to FY08 levels (19% reduction, or \$140 million)
 - Republicans also [defeated three Democratic amendments](#), preventing an additional **\$15.9 million** in additional spending.
- In a [Full Committee markup](#) of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs, Republicans prevented additional spending of **\$568 million** from being added to the programs by defeating two costly Democratic amendments.