

OPENING STATEMENT
The Honorable Andy Harris (R-MD), Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Environment
Tapping America's Energy Potential Through Research and Development

November 30, 2012

Good morning and welcome to this morning's hearing entitled *Tapping America's Energy Potential Through Research and Development*.

Let me begin by noting that this is expected to be the last Energy and Environment Subcommittee hearing of this Congress. I would like to thank Ranking Member Miller and the Members of the Subcommittee for working together to consider and address issues of great importance to the future of our country.

As we have highlighted throughout this Congress, the United States has a wealth of untapped unconventional energy resources. The International Energy Agency recently predicted the U.S. will overtake Saudi Arabia to become the world's largest oil producer by 2020, largely due to the potential for development of U.S. unconventional energy resources. The significant positive economic benefits associated with development of unconventional energy resources are widely acknowledged. Tapping America's unconventional oil and gas resources will additionally provide sorely needed stimulation of our economy, restore our manufacturing sector and create high-paying middle class jobs. Citigroup predicts the cumulative impact of new oil and gas production could create as many as 3.6 million new jobs by 2020. Unfortunately, the degree to which the U.S. will pursue and realize these benefits remains in doubt, primarily due to politics.

Under Chairman Hall's leadership, the Science, Space, and Technology Committee—and this subcommittee in particular—has explored a broad range of energy production-related issues, from the lack of transparency and weak scientific foundations underlying EPA's job-killing regulations to the waste and imbalance in Department of Energy's research and development activities. Unfortunately, time and again, a massive disconnect between the President's words and his Administration's actions are evident.

While President Obama continues to claim he supports an "all-of-the-above" energy strategy, the plain facts tell a different story. This was clearly illustrated in May when DOE's Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy testified to the subcommittee that oil shale was a component of the Administration's all-of-the-above energy strategy. Yet when pressed, he acknowledged DOE was not spending any funding on oil shale R&D, and could not identify anything the Administration was doing to actively advance oil shale. In fact, despite the President's prominent call for an all of the above energy strategy in this year's State of the Union speech, just recently the Obama Administration finalized a plan effectively reducing lands available for oil shale production by two thirds.

Unfortunately, the Administration's rhetoric on energy production is similarly empty when it comes to shale gas and hydraulic fracturing, where the EPA is leading 13 Federal agencies and offices in pursuit of new ways to regulate this incredibly beneficial and safe technology.

Chairman Hall's legislation, the "*Tapping America's Energy Potential Through Research and Development Act of 2012*," addresses the obvious imbalance in DOE research priorities. It restores a true all-of-the-above R&D focus at DOE through authorization of limited and targeted research and development activities that develop key technologies relating to oil shale, shale oil and gas, and produced water utilization.