

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF
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**HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY
AND ENVIRONMENT
ON
CLEAN ENERGY POLICIES THAT REDUCE
OUR DEPENDENCE ON OIL**

APRIL 28, 2010

Chairman Markey, Ranking Member Upton, members of the Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am deeply honored to have the opportunity today to appear before this distinguished panel to discuss the critically important topic of promoting clean energy policies that will reduce America's dependence on oil, and to talk specifically about the impact our oil dependency is having on both our national security and our armed forces.

America's reliance on oil is our Achilles heel. I fundamentally believe that a comprehensive energy strategy—one that cuts our addiction to fossil fuels, boosts clean energy technology, and moves our nation dramatically towards energy independence—is vital to our national security, to the safety of our men and women in uniform, and to the fight against terrorism. The bottom line is this—we must put America in control of its energy future.

I make these arguments before you today first and foremost as a fellow citizen, deeply concerned about ensuring the future prosperity and security of our country. I am a Security Fellow with the Truman National Security Project and have been deeply engaged in the debate about our energy security and about the need to end our dependence on oil. And I come before you as a veteran of the United States military. I am a graduate of the United States Naval Academy and had the honor and privilege of serving on active duty as an officer in the United States Navy for 7 years. As a surface warfare officer stationed onboard a guided missile destroyer, I completed deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

In the winter of 2004, I deployed to the Northern Arabian Gulf with the George Washington Carrier Strike Group. My ship, USS BULKELEY was assigned the mission of defending the two Iraqi oil terminals that sit just off the southern coast of Iraq. These two terminals are the economic crown jewels of the country, with—at the time—almost 90 percent of the country's oil flowing through them onto super-tankers waiting to take that oil to market around the world. It was no secret that these terminals would be prime targets for insurgent attack. The US Navy, along with detachments from the US Coast Guard, worked with our coalition and Iraqi partners to keep these assets safe. In April 2004, that attack came in the form of a two-pronged suicide boat attack. We lost 2 US Navy sailors and 1 US Coast Guardsman, as well as four other service members who sustained serious injuries. The oil terminals, however, were safely defended.

I tell this story because it speaks directly to why we are here today. It was obvious to me then, and is even more so today, that at the very core of my war-time deployment was an energy-

security mission. Brave sailors and coastguardsmen gave their lives defending a global oil infrastructure half a world away. My experience is just a recent chapter in the US military's decade long role of defending our global oil supplies.

I am not alone in feeling this way. Over the course of the last year, I have been part of a national coalition of hundreds of veterans called Operation Freeⁱ. These veterans have crisscrossed the country by bio-diesel powered bus—over 25,000 miles in all—with one simple mission: to secure America with clean energy.

Vice Admiral Dennis McGinn, retired Deputy Chief of Naval Warfare Requirements and Programs, captured the national security dangers of our addiction to oil in testimony he gave before the US Senate last year: He said “In 2008, we sent \$386 billion overseas to pay for oil—much of it going to nations that wish us harm. This is an unprecedented and unsustainable transfer of wealth to other nations. It puts us in the untenable position of funding both sides of the conflict and directly undermines our fight against terror.”ⁱⁱ

Think about that for a second...because of our addiction to oil, we are funding both sides of the conflicts we have sent the young men and women of the US military to fight. Former CIA Director Jim Woolsey explained it this way: “Except for our own Civil War, this is the only war that we have fought where we are paying for both sides. We pay Saudi Arabia \$160 billion for its oil, and \$3 or \$4 billion of that goes to the Wahhabis, who teach children to hate. We are paying for these terrorists with our SUVs.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The fact is that the one billion dollars a day that Americans send overseas for oil is flooding a global oil market that enriches hostile governments, funds terrorist organizations, and props up repressive regimes. This is clearly not in our national interest.

A Truman Project colleague conducted an analysis on the impact that increases to crude oil prices have on the gross revenue streams of certain nations. This research concluded that for every \$5 rise in the price of a barrel of crude oil Putin's Russia receives more than \$18 billion annually, Ahmadinejad's Iran an additional \$7.9 billion annually, and Chavez's Venezuela an additional \$4.7 billion annually.

I am certain that no one in this room today thinks these are the countries where we want to be sending our nation's treasure.

In May of 2009, CNA released a report entitled “Powering America's Defense: Energy and the Risks to America's Security.” Signed by 12 retired generals and admirals, this report unequivocally stated that “America's energy posture constitutes a serious and urgent threat to our national security—militarily, diplomatically and economically.”

I repeat what I said at the beginning of my remarks: a comprehensive energy strategy—one that cuts our addiction to fossil fuels, boosts clean energy technology, and moves our nation dramatically towards energy independence—is vital to our national security. We must put America in control of its energy future.

There is good news though. No one is more acutely aware of this problem than the Department of Defense, and they are leading the efforts on breaking our dependency on oil. This is critically important. Why? Because DoD is the largest energy consumer in the nation, and our nation is the largest energy consumer in the world. According to the CNA report,^{iv} a \$10 per barrel rise in the

price of oil will cost DoD over \$1.3 Billion dollars annually. That is more than the entire procurement budget for our Marines Corps.

Under the energized leadership of Secretary Roy Mabus, the Navy has set ambitious goals for shifting the Fleet to renewable energy sources. On Earth Day last week, the Navy successfully conducted the first flight test of the “Green Hornet”—an F/A-18 Super Hornet multi-mission fighter jet that flew using a 50/50 blend of conventional fuel and a bio-fuel derived from the camelina plant.

This test was the first step in achieving Secretary Mabus’ goal of sailing, by 2012, the “Great Green Fleet”—a carrier battle group entirely powered by sustainable, renewable fuel sources, including nuclear power. Secretary Mabus’ has also set the goal of generating half of the power at the Navy’s shore installations from alternative energy sources—wind, solar or geothermal—by 2020.

The point of these examples is to show you that the Department of Defense recognizes this strategic vulnerability in our national defense and is working to break our dangerous reliance on oil.

But that is just the military, and frankly, it is simply not enough. Congress must act. Without legislation from Congress too many sectors of our economy and our country will continue to stagger along using the dirty fuels of our past. This is not a problem that can wait for future generations to solve. It is imperative that you, our elected representatives, solve this problem now, and enact comprehensive clean energy legislation that will put American power back to work.

Part of that solution also involves making sure that our regulatory agencies—like the EPA—continue to have the tools and authority necessary to drive this transition to a clean energy economy. It makes no sense to deny these agencies the robust regulatory authority they need. Doing so is the equivalent of pulling your troops off the battlefield before your reinforcements arrive. In other words, it is surrendering the fight.

So I close with this simple request—help us build a new, clean energy economy that will make our country more prosperous, that will help make us more secure, and that will once and for all put America back in control of its energy future.

Thank you.

ⁱ www.operationfree.net

ⁱⁱ Statement of Vice Admiral Dennis McGinn, USN, Retired, Member, Military Advisory Board, CNA, before the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Hearing on “Climate Change and National Security,” July 30, 2009

ⁱⁱⁱ Woolsey, James. “The Long War of the 21st Century: How We Must Fight It.” Dwight D. Eisenhower National Security Series. 30 January 2006

^{iv} CNA Report on “Powering America’s Defense: Energy and the Risks to National Security” (May 2009) <http://www.cna.org/documents/PoweringAmericasDefense.pdf>