

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce
“The FY2012 Department of Energy and Nuclear Regulatory Commission Budgets”
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Subcommittee on Environment and Economy
March 16, 2011

During the last year, we have had wake up call after wake up call warning us that we need a new energy policy.

Last April, a coal mine explosion in West Virginia killed 29 miners. It was the worst coal mine disaster in the United States in 40 years.

That same month, the Deepwater Horizon exploded and BP’s Macondo well began gushing oil into the Gulf of Mexico. The oil flowed for three months.

Now, oil is at \$100 per barrel because the Middle East is in turmoil. And Japan faces potential nuclear meltdowns at its damaged reactors.

We don’t yet know whether the Japanese will be able to avoid a catastrophic release of radioactive material. But we do know that we should be investigating the safety and preparedness of U.S. facilities.

After all these energy catastrophes, it should be obvious that we need a new energy policy that promotes clean, safe, affordable energy. We need more vehicles that run on electricity, natural gas, and renewable fuels. We need more wind and solar power. And we need more energy efficiency.

Instead, what we have gotten from the Republican-controlled House is partisanship and an assault on clean energy. The Republican budget for this year, H.R. 1, would slash DOE’s energy efficiency and renewable energy budget by 35%. This deeply flawed budget would also completely eliminate assistance to low-income families who want to weatherize their homes to save energy and lower their utility bills.

And the Republican budget would wipe out the DOE's ability to award loan guarantees to worthy renewable energy projects. Under the Republican approach, dozens of renewable energy projects that are one or two steps away from finalizing a Recovery Act loan guarantee will instead get nothing.

Major projects are counting on these loan guarantees, and tens of thousands of jobs are at stake. There's a huge solar project in California that would create 1,000 construction jobs. There's a wind turbine plant in Idaho. A geothermal project in Oregon. A biofuels facility in Louisiana that would bring 700 construction jobs. The list goes on. All of these projects and all of these jobs are on the Republican chopping block.

Yesterday, Republicans on this Committee said they favored an "all of the above" energy policy. But that's not what is in their budget.

The Republican budget would rescind \$25 billion of the \$47 billion in loan guarantee authority provided by Congress in 2009. The bill would preserve the entire \$18.5 billion in loan guarantees for new nuclear reactors and \$2 billion available for uranium enrichment projects while leaving only \$1.5 billion for all other technologies. That's not an all-of-the-above strategy. That's an all-nuclear strategy.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a supplemental memo detailing the effects of the Republican budget on clean energy jobs.

The Republican attack on clean energy takes us in exactly the wrong direction. Instead of spending our time debating partisan legislation that denies science and guts the Clean Air Act, we should be working together to encourage clean energy investments that will create jobs across the United States.

It should not take a nuclear meltdown to make us face reality. We urgently need a new energy policy. And I hope the testimony today from Secretary Chu and Chairman Jazcko will help point the way.