

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
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**Opening Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman**  
**Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Hearing on “The FY 2013 DOE Budget”**  
**Subcommittee on Energy and Power**  
**March 8, 2012**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Secretary Chu, we’re pleased to see you again at our Committee.

There are a lot of energy challenges that we’re facing, and you’re going to be asked about them by members of our Committee. The American people are concerned about high gasoline prices, and I think, our dependence on oil, oil itself, is leading us to higher prices in gasoline.

Oil is priced in a world market, so even if we produce more oil in the United States, that’s not going to lower the price of gasoline here, because we have oil priced based on what the world price is. Canada, for example, should be the utopia the Republicans pray for. In Canada, they produce more oil than they consume, and yet their prices are just as high as ours. And their people are complaining about the high price of gasoline, as well.

So when we hear Republicans saying, “produce more oil,” they’re doing what the oil companies want, but it’s not going to reduce the price of gasoline.

Energy economists tell us the Republican plan is not even “remotely plausible” to reduce the price of gasoline. It will have “zero” effect on gasoline prices, so we need to face reality. And the reality is that oil prices are determined on a global market. And no matter how much we drill here, our gasoline prices are going to rise if there’s a crisis in the Middle East, if there’s a fear about disruption from Iran, if there’s labor unrest in Nigeria, if OPEC sees that there’s too much oil and they decide to reduce the supply, and if the demand is increasing in China and India.

There’s only one way we can protect ourselves from the impacts of rising oil prices: we need to reduce our demand for oil.

That brings us to another energy challenge we face. We must invest in clean energy to diversify and reduce our energy use. We’re locked in a competition with China and other

countries in the future of clean energy. If clean energy is our future and we're not investing in that, as House Republicans call on us to strike those investments, we are going to lose out on jobs and the future.

We also must confront the enormous challenge of climate change, which threatens our economic strength, our national security, and the health of our citizens. Yet rather than confront this urgent challenge, the Republicans deny the science and vote to block all action on climate change.

Democrats and Republicans in Congress seem to have two completely different visions of our future. The President says we need to listen to scientists and energy experts and become the world leaders in the clean energy economy of the future. House Republicans deny the science and seem to want to obstruct the President every step of the way.

In spite of the constant obstruction and attacks on commonsense policies, the Administration has made significant advances. The President has acted to cut the emissions of cars and trucks, doubling the fuel efficiency of our fleet. As a result, our dependence on oil has declined.

The Department of Energy has made significant investments in renewable energy technologies. And we're seeing the results. Even while the economy has struggled, during the last three years, the solar industry doubled the number of American solar jobs from 46,000 to more than 100,000. The U.S. wind industry has added more than 35% of all new generating capacity over the past four years, second only to natural gas. The percentage of those wind components manufactured in the United States has more than doubled.

The Department of Energy is looking at a weatherization program to improve energy efficiency of more than 750,000 homes across the nation. That's saving low-income families an average of \$437 a year in heating and cooling costs alone.

You won't hear much about these accomplishments from the Republicans. They're going to talk about Solyndra and Keystone. We'll hear that the President's budget didn't include enough money for fossil fuels or nuclear power. We're not going to hear about real solutions from the Republicans. They're playing politics with this issue. We need to get on with the job of making sure America is less dependent on oil, that we have a future in the clean energy sector, and that our consumers face lower gasoline prices as we move away from our dependence on oil.