

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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**Opening Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman**  
**Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**“American Energy Initiative: H.R. 909, A Roadmap for America’s Energy Future”**  
**Subcommittee on Energy and Power**  
**June 3, 2011**

Today we are holding a hearing on a bill that is titled “A Roadmap for America’s Energy Future.” Our nation faces major energy challenges and we need to have a serious conversation about America’s energy future. But the legislation we examine today proposes no innovative solutions to our nation’s energy needs; it doubles down on old, ineffective policies.

We’ve seen this roadmap before. This is a recycled version of the plan developed by the secretive Bush-Cheney Energy Task Force and pushed through Congress by Republicans while they were in office.

The Bush Administration and congressional Republicans spent eight years following this roadmap. They pushed oil and gas drilling, onshore and offshore. They expedited permits and weakened environmental protections. They opposed efforts to increase fuel economy. They called for nuclear fuel reprocessing. They tried to greenwash proposals for drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge by implying congressional appropriators could use royalty revenues to support renewable energy. They pushed the dirtiest alternative and unconventional fuels – coal-to-liquids, oil shale, and tar sands.

And where did this roadmap lead us?

Energy prices soared and carbon pollution increased. And we became even more dependent on foreign oil. In the last year of the Bush Administration, the Energy Information Administration projected that our dependence on oil and oil imports would continue to rise year after year.

Today, we are sending nearly a billion dollars per day overseas for foreign oil. We use 25% of the world’s oil, but we only have 2% of the world’s oil reserves. We’ve worked to increase our domestic crude oil production by nearly 300,000 barrels per day. And yet, gas prices remain high.

Increasing oil production is not going to solve our energy needs. Even if we doubled our oil production, oil prices would still be set by world markets and leave us vulnerable to price shocks.

H.R. 909's roadmap doesn't lead to the future. It leads to the past. The technology to turn coal into liquid fuel has been around since World War II. Its problem is the same as it has always been: huge amounts of carbon pollution that will drive uncontrolled climate change.

American entrepreneurs and inventors are using technology to unlock real energy solutions: energy sources that are clean, safe, and affordable – and grow our economy. In testimony provided to the Committee for today's hearing, we will hear that the wind and solar industries will create over 200,000 new jobs.

But H.R. 909 would abandon our clean energy future to China. For many reasons, it is unlikely to help renewable energy, including because of flaws in its reverse auction mechanism.

The bill does nothing on efficiency, which is the cheapest and most reliable new source of supply. It promotes the form of nuclear energy that risks putting nuclear bomb grade material into the hands of terrorists. It does nothing to develop carbon capture and storage – the technology that coal needs to remain competitive in a carbon-constrained world.

In 2001, Vice President Cheney said, "Conservation may be a sign of personal virtue, but it is not a sufficient basis for a sound, comprehensive energy policy."

Ten years later, the Republican budget defunds federal investment in energy conservation and innovation.

The rest of the world has been racing ahead over the last decade. It's too bad the Republicans' energy policies haven't.

We've seen this roadmap before, and we know where it leads us.