



Providing Energy Independence for our Nation

The future of our nation's energy supply has become a topic of great interest, both in Congress and throughout our country. A growing and thriving economy requires stable and affordable energy supplies, and, like many Idahoans, I am concerned about the energy future of the United States. Today 58 percent of all of our nation's oil is imported. These imports account for a large percentage of the U.S. trade deficit. As long as the United States is dependent on other nations for sources of energy, our energy supply will be directly impacted by conflicts in regions with high oil supply, foreign political environments that are unfriendly to the United States, and increased demand for oil on the world market. As a nation, we must continue looking for ways to reduce energy prices and improve our energy independence.

I strongly believe that our efforts to address this growing problem should be comprehensive in nature and that we should explore every opportunity to develop viable alternative energy sources. To that end, I have supported legislation to take a number of steps to increase energy efficiency in the United States and encourage the development of renewable energy sources. Solar, biomass, geothermal, hydro and wind power are attractive energy sources for the future, and I believe that we should continue to expand the research, perfect the technology and promote their use. In addition, I believe we should continue to find domestic sources of traditional forms of energy, like oil and natural gas.

Nuclear Energy:

I strongly support a revitalized nuclear energy research and development program in Idaho and expanded use of nuclear power to meet our nation's growing energy needs. Due to continuing uncertainty in the electricity sector and our nation's reliance on foreign sources of energy, I am convinced now more than ever that a renewed commitment to nuclear power is vital to our nation's energy and national security. Idaho National Laboratory (INL) is the nation's lead nuclear energy research laboratories, and the research done there demonstrates great promise for the future of nuclear energy in our nation.

I also believe that nuclear energy is the key to reducing carbon emissions. In a recent survey, fully 74 percent of Americans expressed support for nuclear energy, and with good reason. Over the past 13 years, U.S. nuclear energy plants were responsible for avoiding emissions of almost 50 million short tons of sulfur dioxide, nearly 20 million short tons of nitrogen oxides, and over 9,400 million metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Any effort to address climate change must include a serious commitment to nuclear energy.

Climate Change Legislation:

I share the concern of many Idahoans for our environment and recognize that we must do what we can to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) where possible. However, I have major concerns that H.R. 2454, the so-called American Clean Energy and Security Act, will have an extremely

damaging effect on our economy without really improving climate conditions over the next 100 years or doing anything to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. This is why I voted against it when it was considered on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Instead of a carefully thought-out proposal to increase our energy independence and reduce GHG emissions in an effective and reasonable way, H.R. 2454 picks winners and losers in the energy market. By excluding major types of non-emitting power generation like hydropower and nuclear energy from the Renewable Energy Standards, Congressional Democrats show that they are less interested in truly address climate change than in punishing activities and industries that they don't like.

In addition, I am concerned that unless growing economies like China and India participate in a cap and trade system to limit GHG emissions similar to the one created by the bill, U.S. industries will be unable to compete on the world stage and American jobs will be forced overseas. The bill depends on technologies like carbon capture and sequestration that are still largely unavailable and untested. It would heavily subsidize purchase of electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles, while electricity prices would skyrocket under the mandates put into place by the bill.

Instead of creating a host of government mandates and forcing consumers to foot the bill for this legislation, I support using technology, incentives, and innovation to move our economy to a sustainable, independent energy source. I believe that to do so we must look at *all* the options, including renewable energy, nuclear energy, and domestic oil production. This is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 2828, the American Energy Innovation Act, comprehensive energy legislation that represents a fiscally responsible approach to reducing our dependence on foreign energy, providing a cleaner environment, and putting Americans to work. By encouraging innovation, promoting conservation and efficiency without government mandates, and increasing production of American energy through nuclear energy production, this legislation is a real solution to the challenges facing our nation.