



## Environment & Energy talking points 2014

### **What energy and environmental policies should legislators and taxpayers support?**

Open public onshore and offshore lands to leasing, exploration, drilling, production, timber harvesting, and mining – under rules that punish bad or negligent behavior, ensure that projects are conducted carefully and responsibly, and let the private sector find best ways to create jobs, produce energy, and generate revenue.

Implement policies and support technologies that make economic, environmental, and technological sense. If they can't be defended on these grounds, government and taxpayers should not promote or fund them.

Fracking has unlocked centuries of oil and gas – via private investment and private technology on private lands. Ensure that EPA and other agencies do not block fracking on public lands or impose needless new regulations on federal, state, and private lands, despite excellent state and local regulations and records.

End subsidies and mandates. For 20 years, government mandates and subsidies for wind, solar, and biofuels have cost billions – but brought no net jobs, while raising electricity costs and reducing its reliability.

Ensure a level playing field for all companies and technologies. The same economic and environmental rules should apply to all. No one should receive exemptions from pollution, NEPA, eagle, or endangered species laws, whether they are conducting fossil fuel, renewable energy, or any other activities.

Insist on honest, transparent, accountable, independently peer-reviewed science and regulatory actions. Data and studies used by EPA and other agencies to support rulemaking must be made available for review and analysis by outside experts, to ensure accuracy, quality, integrity and objectivity, to comply with the Information Quality Act and other laws, and to support the overall public interest.

## **How should we assess energy conservation and renewable energy proposals?**

We have vast oil, gas, coal, uranium, and other minerals resources – and should use them, as responsible stewards, to serve humanity. Failure to do so is like starving while having freezers of untouched food. Responsible stewardship also means conserving, increasing energy efficiency, and improving technologies like fracking, to create new energy opportunities, safely produce more resources from existing deposits, and ensure maximum, sustained production, job creation, revenue generation, and human welfare.

Most wind, solar, and biofuel projects are inherently unsustainable and parasitic. They require subsidies and/or mandates; fossil fuel backup generators; extra land, transmission lines, and raw materials; and often exemptions from environmental laws that are vigorously enforced against other industries. They take billions of dollars from productive sectors and taxpayers, depriving them of needed funding, channeling the money to politically connected companies that support friendly politicians, and thereby killing two to four jobs in these other sectors for each renewable energy job created.

Wind and solar electricity costs 2 to 5 times more than electricity generated via coal or gas. According to the Energy Information Administration, generating electricity from onshore wind will cost \$75 to \$138 per megawatt-hour; with offshore wind, \$243; with photovoltaic solar, \$210. That raises energy costs for businesses and families, kills manufacturing and other jobs, and hurts poor families most of all.

Most so-called oil subsidies involve similar tax treatment given to all companies, to deduct costs of doing business, manufacturing products, and employing workers. The proper method is to evaluate *subsidies per unit of energy actually produced*. Subsidies for generating electricity with highly reliable coal or natural gas = \$0.44 per megawatt-hour; with nuclear = \$1.59 per MWH (4 times higher). Generating electricity with intermittent wind = \$23.37 (53 times higher); and with solar = \$24.34 (55 times higher).

Wind turbines and solar panels impact vast wildlife habitat as well as scenic and agricultural land. Turbines kill millions of raptors, other birds, and bats per year, with no penalties assessed on wind facility operators. Turbines also reduce local property values – and turbine noise, vibration, and shadow flicker adversely affect people's sleep, health, and well-being. Because of China's lax health, safety, and environmental rules, mining for rare-earth metals used in turbine magnets and solar panels destroys Chinese wildlife and agricultural areas, poisons the air, releases radioactive contamination, and endangers workers and nearby residents.

Current ethanol production requires corn from an area the size of Iowa, plus huge quantities of water, fertilizers, pesticides, diesel fuel, and natural gas to grow those crops and turn them into alcohol. Some farmers make money from ethanol. But meat and fish producers must pay more for feed – which means family food bills skyrocket -- and international aid agencies pay more for corn and wheat, so more starving people go hungry longer. Fertilizer runoff causes algae blooms that kill Gulf of Mexico marine life.

## How should we evaluate EPA rules for coal-based electricity generation and automobile mileage?

Emissions of key air pollutants *declined nearly 90%* from 1970 to 2010, even as coal-based electricity generation increased 180% ... miles traveled rose 170% ... and the U.S. population grew by 110 million. A big part of the reason is that U.S. coal-fired generators invested over \$100 billion in technologies to reduce power-plant emissions. Today's air quality is safe, and pollution continues to decline under pre-Obama regulations.

Today's "advanced supercritical" coal technologies are highly efficient. Combined with other state-of-the-art technologies, they are reducing key emissions by as much as two-thirds more than existing plants are able to do – while also reducing carbon dioxide emissions by up to 25% more than the oldest plants.

EPA health risk claims are exaggerated or imaginary. Its new soot standard permits *one ounce* of super-fine dust to be dispersed in air one-half mile long, one-half mile wide, and one story tall! Such amounts are not dangerous. EPA illegally used *human subjects* in laboratory tests, exposing them to levels of fine soot the agency said were dangerous – but then ignored the test results when the subjects were not harmed.

EPA's rules on coal-fired power-plant carbon dioxide, soot, and mercury are shutting down facilities, preventing new ones from being built, devastating coal mining communities, reducing the reliability of our power grid, sending electricity prices higher, and threatening millions of manufacturing and other jobs.

The Energy Institute, IHS Global Insights, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other analysts calculate that EPA's CO<sub>2</sub> regulations will raise business and family energy costs by up to \$50 billion per year – with the impacts falling disproportionately on Southern and Midwestern communities and lower income families. Many households in these regions will suffer a devastating \$1,200 loss in annual incomes and spending.

EPA rules bring no health or environmental benefits. *They endanger health and welfare.* They kill jobs and raise costs for electricity, heating, air conditioning, business, manufacturing, hospital, school, commuting and food. They force people to work multiple lower paying jobs, commute longer distances, and suffer sleep deprivation. Families must deal with more stress, depression, drug and alcohol abuse, and spousal and child abuse. Nutrition and medical care suffer. More people have strokes and heart attacks, die prematurely, or commit suicide. However, EPA refuses to consider these factors in developing its regulations.

EPA has imposed new 54.5-mpg automobile standards that will make cars smaller, lighter in weight, and less safe – causing thousands of additional injuries, disabilities, and deaths every year. Again, EPA failed to include these human life, health, and welfare considerations in conducting its miles-per-gallon cost-benefit analyses.

## **What factors should be considered with regard to hydraulic fracturing or fracking?**

Fracking can give us centuries of new oil and gas supplies. Natural gas is needed to back up wind turbines, provide petrochemical feed stocks, and replace coal that EPA is shutting down over exaggerated health concerns. Domestic oil can replace imports from dangerous, unstable, and unfriendly countries.

Fracking has reduced U.S. natural gas prices from \$8 to \$3 per thousand cubic feet (million Btu). That's good for electricity generation, factories, petrochemicals, jobs, and families. It conserves energy by increasing oil and gas production from old and new wells and fields, leaving less behind in the ground.

By 2020, shale gas is expected to create 3.6 million U.S. jobs (directly ... and indirectly via lower costs for energy and chemical feed stocks). It will substantially reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

**Most fracking occurs 10,000 feet or more below surface, far below water aquifers and wells. Most of the few problems in 60 years of fracking were due to improper cementing of well casing pipes.**

Fracking fluids are 99% water and clay, plus mostly organic chemicals used in kitchens and food. Water is increasingly recycled. Fracking-related "earthquakes" are barely detectable, and bigger tremors appear to be due to large-scale injection of waste liquids into underground reservoirs at high pressure over many years.

Radical environmentalists oppose fracking because it produces fossil fuels, demolishes claims that we are running out of oil and gas, and makes expensive wind, solar, and biofuel energy even harder to justify. But fossil fuels have brought incredible improvements in human living standards, health, welfare, longevity, prosperity, and environmental quality. It would be immoral and unethical not to use this energy.

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