

**Statement of Mr. Tanner Hopfauf**  
Submitted for the Record by Mr. Armstrong  
April 4, 2019

Dear Congressman Armstrong,

I am writing so share my input in response to the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis' announced hearing, entitled "Generation Climate: Young Leaders Urge Climate Action Now." The hearing is described as "in contrast to a typical Congressional hearing, the committee will hear from young leaders who are urging policymakers to take climate action now and finally address the climate crisis." I work in the oil and gas industry in North Dakota and I consider myself a young leader who would be directly impacted by the "climate action" being discussed in Congress right now. This is a complex issue so I hope the Committee will consider my perspective, which is shared by many young leaders throughout the country who may not be represented at this hearing today.

My name is Tanner Hopfauf, I grew up in southwestern North Dakota in the rural town of Dickinson. I attended K-12 here and graduated from Dickinson High School in May of 2014. While in high school, I decided I wanted to pursue a degree in engineering and with the increase in activity and opportunities presented by the oil and gas industry I knew petroleum engineering was my goal. Once I learned the University of North Dakota (UND) offered a bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering, I applied and was accepted. While attending UND, I was fortunate enough to have an internship during each of the three summers, two of which were in western ND. Upon graduating in May of 2018, I accepted a full-time position with an exploration and production company and have been there since. My career thus far and educational decisions would have been drastically different were it not for the oil and gas industry in my community.

My story is not unique. Before the oil and gas industry really became established, many young adults from rural North Dakota were forced to look for jobs and long term career opportunities out of state after graduating high school and college. Simply put, the jobs that offered long term career advancement that would appeal to young adults entering the workforce didn't exist in ND. As a result, our rural communities were shrinking and we were losing our small town culture and a way of life so many had enjoyed for generations before. The oil and gas industry has completely changed this outlook, local citizens now have the opportunity to go to work and have fulltime careers in the area they have always called home. This industry has provided a spark to our rural communities and has given a breath of life back into them. Communities that had been shrinking for many years before have begun to grow and prosper. People are choosing to move to and live in rural ND because of the jobs that are now available. Additionally, local residents now have the ability to remain in their home town communities while having successful and meaningful careers. The boom in the economy has provided so much for the individuals that are working directly in the industry, but it has also positively influenced the way of life for all citizens living in the area and even the entire state. Rural citizens have benefited from increased infrastructure, advancing education systems, and additional sources of entertainment; so many things that rural North Dakotans would have never thought possible or to be available in their communities now are because of the oil and gas industry.

The oil and gas industry is reshaping North Dakota and the economy at the local and state level. This industry has put North Dakota on the map, and continues to provide many opportunities for rural North Dakotans. Without this industry our economies would cease to grow, job opportunities would no longer be abundant, and once again local citizens would be forced to look out of state for career opportunities. I stand behind the oil and gas industry and will continue to support its involvement in rural North Dakota communities. I am proud to have grown up in Western

North Dakota, I am proud to have graduated from college in Eastern North Dakota, and I am proud to be an active member of the workforce the oil and gas industry has established in North Dakota communities.

The oil and gas industry in North Dakota has revolutionized the way we extract oil and gas from the land and has an incredible record of post-production reclamation. We live where we work so we take environmental stewardship very seriously. As this committee moves forward, I hope they will acknowledge the excellent stewardship of our resources that is happening in North Dakota right now, and all the economic opportunities and prosperity it has created for our residents. Ours is a young, vibrant industry that I hope can gain more respect and understanding rather than be used as a scape goat to win political points. I am a young leader and I want my voice to be heard. Climate change and the policies being discussed pose a direct threat to my industry, and I don't want to be collateral damage in this political debate.

Thank you for your work on this committee and for representing my voice and the voices of so many others working and thriving in western North Dakota.

Sincerely,

Tanner Hopfauf