

Rep. Schakowsky
Opening Statement
Energy and Commerce
Markup – H.R. 2689, H.R. 4092, and H.R. 6
April 29, 2014

I support the substitute amendments for H.R. 2689 and H.R. 4092, each of which would support energy efficiency investments in buildings and schools. I look forward to their swift passage tomorrow.

However, I strongly oppose H.R. 6, the Domestic Prosperity and Global Freedom Act, which would rapidly increase U.S. natural gas exports. That would pose significant threats to public health and the environment when we should instead be investing in the clean energy resources of the future.

Since 2005, the EPA has been prevented from regulating hydraulic fracturing, and the types and amount of chemicals used in the process have been legally kept hidden from the public. Over the same period, dozens of drinking water sources – from Virginia to Colorado – have been contaminated, with hydraulic fracturing the suspected cause.

There is no doubt that more approved export terminals will lead to more fracking. More fracking – without new safeguards – means more water pollution.

How many more American towns have to have their water poisoned before we enact safety measures to protect public health? Congresswoman DeGette has introduced legislation since 2008 to allow the EPA to regulate hydraulic fracturing and require reporting of chemicals injected underground. Last year, I introduced legislation to require testing of water sources near hydraulic fracturing sites so that the public can know whether their water is safe. Neither of those bills has been considered by this Committee. If this Congress plans to rapidly increase the amount of hydraulic fracturing, we should at least enact some common sense safety measures.

Rather than increasing our exports of fossil fuels, we should be focused on developing a surplus of clean energy technologies that can be exported. There are three times as many jobs created per \$1 spent on renewable energy than on fossil fuel or nuclear energy. According to the Pew Charitable Trusts, the clean energy sector could be worth \$1.9 trillion in revenue from 2012 to 2018. Our commitment to renewable energy could make the United States the global leader in wind, solar, hydro, marine, and geothermal power. That should be our goal.

Some have claimed that passage of this legislation will address the energy crisis in Ukraine. It won't. Our first natural gas exports – even for projects that have already been approved – won't start until late 2015, and most won't get started until years after that. On top of that, the vast majority of currently planned natural gas export terminals have committed to send their product elsewhere – mostly to Asia. This is not a near-term solution to the Ukraine problem.

H.R. 6 would further threaten our water resources at a time that we should instead be focused on clean energy exports. I urge my colleagues to join me in defeating this legislation, and I yield back.