

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Joe Barton**  
**Chairman Emeritus, Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Subcommittee on Energy and Power**  
**Hearing on “American Energy Abundance: Exports and the Changing**  
**Global Energy Landscape”**  
**May 7, 2013**

Thank you, Chairman Whitfield, for holding this hearing to examine the national security and foreign policy implications of our abundant energy resources. America’s energy revolution – the massive increase in oil and gas production from shale formations – has shifted the geopolitical framework governing foreign diplomacy. The positive effects are being felt both in the U.S. and abroad, and this is just the beginning.

The increase in oil and gas development is strengthening our economy here at home by supporting nearly 9 million jobs and sending more than 30 billion dollars to the Federal Treasury every year. It is the bright spot in an otherwise gloomy economy.

The growth in domestic production also means we are importing less, freeing up supplies of natural gas and oil around the world, weakening the grip of state-owned energy companies like Russia's Gazprom, which once held sway over European natural gas markets.

Allowing exports of American natural gas, and possibly even oil, would further enhance our power and influence – strengthening our relationships with allies and weakening the control of adversaries such as Iran.

I support American energy exports because I support free markets and free trade. The fundamental principle of free markets is that both sides to transactions benefit. We keep jobs here at home – our businesses can continue to innovate and grow. Our allies around the world benefit because they can diversify their supply and decrease their reliance on OPEC nations. Together, we benefit knowing the safety and security of our energy supply will not be subject to the whims of adversaries seeking to use energy as a political weapon.

I want to thank the witnesses for appearing before us today to allow us to better understand what may be possible in this new era of energy.

Thank you, I yield back.