Mr. Chairman, we are at a crossroads. The oil and gas industry, through rapid technological advancements in horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing and sheer force of will, has catapulted the United States into the world's leading producer of energy. This development has occurred as access to resources on federal lands is more restricted than it has ever been; administrative agencies propose rules that are aimed at punishing fossil fuels; and as the White House speaks of an "all of the above" energy policy that has – in reality – been a huge giveaway of federal benefits to unproven "advanced" technologies that promise too much and deliver too little.

In addition, the United States has been struggling through a sluggish, protracted economic recovery creating too few jobs and no real wage growth to speak of. Yet, despite all of these obstacles, the American energy industry marshals on. And we find ourselves with a real opportunity, the first since the early 1970s, to continue the phenomenal growth we have witnessed thus far. And that opportunity lies in lifting the outdated ban on exporting crude oil from the United States.

That is why I am so happy to support my friend, Joe Barton, and his legislation that lifts the ban. Mr. Chairman, I know that you support this bill and I cannot thank you enough for holding this markup today. With this legislation, producers will have someplace to send crude that now sits in storage tanks. Our allies in other countries will now have an option other than Russia or less-than-friendly Middle Eastern regimes when purchasing crude. And finally, Mr. Chairman, as we consider international implications of the Iran nuclear deal that we will consider later this month, it seems unreal that lifting sanctions on Iranian oil exports would not also be met with the same free-trading policy for commodities produced here at home.

So, I am thrilled that we are having this markup today and will continue to gather support for this important effort as the Republican Majority Whip. I yield back.