

**OPENING STATEMENT FOR CHAIR CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND GRID
SECURITY**

**MIDLAND, TEXAS, FIELD HEARING:
“AMERICAN ENERGY EXPANSION: IMPROVING LOCAL
ECONOMIES AND COMMUNITIES’ WAY OF LIFE.”**

FEBRUARY 16, 2023

As prepared for delivery

Thank you, Chairman Duncan.

And let me thank you, Congressman Pfluger, the first Member of Congress representing the Permian Basin to be on the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Your assistance in planning this field hearing has been very helpful, and much appreciated.

Our primary energy objective is to ensure reliable, secure, and affordable delivery of energy to Americans...

...to their homes, to their businesses, the grocery stores, and everywhere in between.

We must build upon our nation’s diverse and abundant natural resources, to create more secure supplies, more dependable power...

...and we must work to develop a predictable regulatory landscape... one that unleashes America’s unmatched genius for innovation and technological leadership.

While we have examined solutions in our hearing room in Washington, D.C. to secure our energy future, we are here today in Texas to see where it all begins...

... in places like the Permian Basin.

It begins with the workers, the families, all the people living and working in energy producing communities, like Midland, and so many others, large and small, throughout this country.

We cannot achieve a more secure energy future, create more jobs, and increase affordability without the people who do this work and take the risks to produce American energy.

Today’s hearing will shed light on the benefits of energy production at the local and state level.

It should serve as a reminder of how American energy expansion helps communities across the country...

...and how we can change the regulatory environment to speed up this expansion.

America is a diverse nation blessed with abundant natural resources. We should be responsible stewards of these resources to ensure our communities flourish.

Different areas of the country have different advantages, and the one-size fits all, DC knows best approach of this current administration is not the way to go.

For instance, the Pacific Northwest has abundant hydropower...

... the Marcellus Shale has helped make the U.S. the world leader in natural gas production...

... Wyoming has the potential to provide uranium to power advanced nuclear reactors across the country...

... and the Permian Basin has made us a world leader in oil and gas production.

The oil and gas industry in the Permian Basin has brought tremendous benefits in terms of economic opportunity and tax revenues for local schools and communities.

Last year, the Texas oil and gas industry paid nearly \$25 billion in state and local taxes and royalties to support schools, infrastructure, and local services.

This is almost double the amounts just 5 years ago. Permian Basin operations represent a major portion of these revenues.

This administration has signaled repeatedly their intention to reduce oil and gas production in coming years.

Today, we'll hear from our witnesses on what this would mean for communities like Midland.

Lost jobs. Lost revenues. And lost livelihoods.

I'd like to join my colleagues in thanking the Midland Mayor, Lori Blong.

You sit at the intersection of energy, economic development, and the needs and concerns of the families who live here in Midland.

You, and Mr. Carrasco, with the Midland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, both have unique perspectives on the challenges facing small businesses, including surging energy costs.

Given your experience, and the experience of our other witnesses, I want to use this hearing today to explore the role of innovation in advancing cleaner, more productive operations.

Allowing businesses the freedom to experiment is fundamental to innovation.

We saw this with the shale revolution, where entrepreneurs found more effective, efficient, and cleaner ways to produce oil and gas—giving new life to old wells and opening up new opportunities to produce American energy.

...and we did this with some of the highest environmental and labor standards in the world.

Unlocking our resources and removing barriers to American energy should be a bipartisan goal.

I'm confident that the voices we'll hear from today will reinforce that unleashing American energy is the best path forward to strengthening our energy security, reducing emissions, and making life more affordable across the board.

Thank you, I yield back.

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