Testimony of

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To the U.S. House of Representatives'
Committee on Foreign Affairs

"How Climate Change Threatens U.S. National Security"

April 2, 2019

Chairman Engel, Ranking Member McCaul, and Members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

My name is Barry Worthington. I am the Executive Director of the United States Energy Association. I have been in this role for 30 years.

The U.S. Energy Association helps expand energy infrastructure in developing countries with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and contributes to policy and technical discussions with the U.S. Department of Energy to expand the use of clean energy technology around the world.

Through our membership, USEA also represents more than 100 companies and associations across the U.S. energy sector, from the largest Fortune 500 companies to small energy consulting firms. Our members include energy production companies and energy efficiency companies, but also engineering, finance, legal, research and consulting organizations.

USEA's objective is to convey information about the realities of global energy issues in the 21st Century.

We are an educational association both by function and IRS tax status.

Thank you for inviting me to appear before you today.

My intent is to offer you information and observations and to convey an offer to be a resource for you and your staff as you begin to tackle the priorities of the 116th Congress.

The risks of climate change are real, and industrial activity around the globe impacts climate. Addressing climate change is a challenge for our country. It affects every world citizen.

While our industry addresses the changing climate, it continues to ensure American citizens have access to increasingly safe, affordable, reliable, and clean energy.

We have more than 1 billion global citizens with no access to commercial energy and another billion with inadequate access. Women in developing countries spend all day foraging for sticks and animal dung to generate energy for cooking, lighting, and heating. This is dangerous. Burning firewood and animal dung indoors kills children, causes asthma, and other health problems. Access to energy provides improved health, education, and economic development. Considering a global population growth of another two billion leaves the energy industry to provide 4 billion more energy consumers access by mid-century.

Our industry's challenge is to double the provision of energy services globally, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Many of these new consumers will utilize fossil fuels because they are domestically available, abundant, and affordable. We should work harder toward helping them use high efficiency/low emissions technologies. USEA members have volunteered to do this for over 25 years in over 50 countries. Lack of adequate energy supplies poses national security concerns for all nations.

Domestically our industry has undertaken a wide range of initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We are very proud of our progress.

For example, electric power carbon dioxide emissions declined 28% from 2005 to 2017. We expect this trend to continue.

Methane emissions from the natural gas industry declined by 18.6% from 1990 to 2015 even though U.S. natural gas production increased by more than 50%.

Since 2000, the energy industry has invested at least $120 billion in emissions-reducing technologies.

We think that the solution to the dual challenges of global climate change and global access to safe, reliable, affordable and clean energy is through technology.

An "all of the above" approach is essential. This means all the renewables such as solar, wind, hydro and geothermal, as well as traditional fuels and technology such as nuclear and all the fossil fuels. We need to work towards assuring that fossil fuel utilization uses high efficiency/low emissions technology including carbon capture and storage.

Americans lead the world in innovation and we can complete the energy revolution that began in earnest a decade ago. Increased U.S. domestic energy production has actually resulted in lower emissions of carbon dioxide.

And we can do this without additional regulation. We do not need the Clean Power Plan and we do not need the Paris Accord to achieve continued progress in our industry reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We would rather pay the engineers and technicians to reduce emissions then to pay the lawyers to prove that we are in compliance with a needless regulatory regime.

And our citizens, society, and economy will pay. According to the US Chamber of Commerce Global Energy Institute, to meet the Paris Accord goals:

- U.S. GDP would plunge by $250 billion;
- the economy would shed 2.7 million jobs;
- the average household income would drop $160.

And to meet mid-century goals:

- GDP would be cut by nearly $3 trillion;
- industrial employment would fall by 6.5 million jobs;
- and average household income would drop $7,000.

We must continue to find ways to reduce emissions without suffering these hits to the economy.

And other countries are today expanding their consumption of fossil fuels. Coal mines and plants are being built in Russia and China and dozens of other countries. These plants will be releasing greenhouse gas emissions for 50 to 60 years.

If we implement the Paris Accord as it exists today, our economic competitors will be accessing cheap energy while we force American consumers and industries to utilize higher-priced energy. Does this threaten our national security?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your kind attention.