

Testimony of  
Barry Worthington  
Executive Director, United States Energy Association

To the U.S. House of Representatives'  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change

*"Time for Action: Addressing the Environmental and Economic Effects of Climate Change"*

February 6, 2019

Chairman Tonko, Ranking Member Shimkus, and Members of the Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change.

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 drives 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 both 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 do not lobby. We are not an advocacy group. 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 116<sup>th</sup> 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. It affects the energy industry trying to adapt and help energy end users adapt to changing weather patterns.

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

We have more than 1 billion global citizens with no access to commercial energy. 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 dung indoors kills children, causes asthma, and other health problems.

Access to energy, on the other hand, provides improved health, education, economic development and it allows mothers and fathers to spend more time with their families.

Central to energy access is lighting. In developing countries, simple lighting reduces thefts, rapes, personal assaults, and other crimes. It paves the way for economic development. From businesses such as cell phone charging enterprises to refrigeration for vaccines, energy access improves human life.

Energy access and expansion in this country led to industrialization which has improved our health and welfare, built our economy and put the U.S. in the position to help the world achieve the same.

Our industry's challenge is to double the provision of energy services globally, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80%.

Though there are 1.5 billion people with no access to energy, there are 1.5 billion other citizens with inadequate access. Considering a global population growth of two billion leaves the energy industry to provide 5 billion more energy consumers access by mid-century.

Many of these consumers will utilize fossil fuels because they are domestic, abundant, and affordable. We should work harder toward helping them use high efficiency/low emissions technologies. USEA has been doing this for over 25 years in over 50 countries.

And domestically we are expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80%. Our industry has undertaken a wide range of initiatives to reduce, avoid, or sequester 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 domestic energy production has resulted in lower emissions of carbon dioxide and pollutants while lowering costs to consumers.

Mr. Chairman, I have two more points.

The first is I met recently with the state and national leaders involved with the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program known as LIHEAP. They have convinced me that we do not totally appreciate the impact of energy costs on low-income consumers.

I know our industry has done a great job of lowering energy price. This is indisputable. But having low energy prices does not mean that a large number of Americans will not have trouble paying their energy bills.

While our economy is strong, employment numbers are up, and wages are increasing, we still have a sizeable percentage of our population that cannot afford to have their energy bills increase.

I hope you will consider this in your deliberations on how we respond to climate change.

Thank you for your kind attention.

