

Global climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our time. The overwhelming consensus of scientists is that climate change is real and that human activities are a major cause. If we do not act, climate change will have severe, long-term human and environmental consequences around the globe.

Our nation's dependence on oil is nothing less than national security issue. Americans consume more than 20% of the world's oil, but own only 3% of global oil reserves. Our need to import oil ties our future to foreign nations—sometimes even hostile nations. Furthermore, dramatic price spikes reveal again and again the danger of relying on petroleum to fuel our economy. It is critical that we transition towards clean, renewable fuels that can be produced domestically.

Investment in Clean Energy

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I have consistently pushed for greater funding for clean, renewable energy. Clean energy is a double opportunity: it supports high-paying American jobs and improves our environment. Renewable energy is an industry of the future. By investing now, we can build the foundations for lasting economic growth and prosperity. Similarly, expanding tax credits for renewable energy will help American families buy energy-efficient cars and homes and will accelerate our national transition towards clean and renewable energy.

Fuel Prices

When oil and gas prices are exceptionally high, consumers need relief. Instead of giving multi-billion dollar tax breaks to big oil companies that are already making sky-high profits, we ought to provide targeted aid directly to families in need. I am an enthusiastic supporter of the [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#) (LIHEAP), which reimburses low-income families and seniors across the nation for their home heating costs. I also support expanding the [Weatherization Assistance Program](#), which helps families make energy-saving improvements to their homes, like improving insulation. By reducing energy consumption, these renovations save consumers money, decrease pollution, and help address the problem of climate change. I've also supported bills to prevent price gouging on gasoline and address speculation in oil and gas markets.

A Comprehensive Approach to Climate Change

Our nation needs a comprehensive energy strategy that addresses energy use and encourages conservation, and I am deeply committed to that work.

I believe the best approach to solving climate change is to implement a national cap on greenhouse gas emissions and auction permits to polluting industries. The cap should apply only to the industrial polluters which produce the vast majority of America's emissions, not to individuals or households. Under this market-based approach, large corporations would be required to pay for the right to pollute the air we breathe. They would be allowed to sell any surplus permits, creating an additional incentive to reduce emissions. Over time, the overall pollution cap should decline, encouraging continued innovation and improvements in energy efficiency.

In 2009, I voted for a comprehensive climate change bill, the American Clean Energy and Security Act. It passed the House of Representatives but unfortunately was not taken up by the Senate.

Over the next two years, the most promising avenue for addressing climate change is through regulatory action by the Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA began regulating greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act in 2009. I support the EPA's actions as the best available option for addressing an urgent problem. I vehemently oppose any effort to weaken the Clean Air Act—a 40-year old, highly-successful environmental law—or to limit the EPA's ability to address climate change.

Green Building

As the Ranking Democrat on the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Subcommittee, I am acutely aware of the promise and importance of green building. Buildings are responsible for almost 40 percent of U.S. energy consumption, and residential houses account for almost half of that consumption. From smart site planning to energy-efficient design, green housing reduces carbon emissions, fosters healthier

environments, and even saves money. In the 110th Congress, I authored and passed legislation to require new affordable housing units to meet green building standards (H.R. 2536, the HOPE VI Green Building and Technical Assistance Act).

More Information

I am a member of the [Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition](#), the largest U.S. House caucus devoted to advancing clean energy innovation, halting climate change, and protecting our environment.

[Make Every Day Earth Day](#) – the Department of Energy’s tips to save energy and protect the environment.

[Energy Savers](#) – More ways to save energy, from home landscaping to windows to insulation

[EnergyStar](#) – find energy efficient appliances and improve your home

[Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#)

[Weatherization Assistance Program](#)