

As a political topic, energy has become one of those issues reduced to sound bites, confusing facts, and often misleading information. While not as emotional or seemingly threatening as other issues, it is nonetheless one of the most important topics we can and *must* address. It is also an issue that we have to address from an American viewpoint, not one that is attempting to appease the rest of the world. We all saw how ineffective the recent Copenhagen Climate Conference was, and how trying to force 192 countries to come together under one format is impossible. So, instead of trying to create a global initiative, why not create a real American energy policy – once and for all?

This memorandum will serve a simple purpose; to briefly and efficiently describe the issues at hand, and offer easy-to-follow resolutions. These ideas should be brought into the public forum and discussed in a civil manner. Too often in today’s political environment, elected officials and candidates for various offices tend to attack their opponents, pointing blame in other directions, and rarely offer substantive ideas and concepts on how the problem can be taken care of. When we do get so-called resolutions, they are many years and even decades out in the future. How about doing something now...in our lifetime?

I am not suggesting that there is one simple answer. However, I am suggesting that the choices we have to fix our energy problems are very clear. We will not be able to enjoy that clarity unless we are all willing to stop all of the bickering and non-productive political posturing. Perhaps it may seem somewhat naïve to think that we can do anything today that would be simple and forthright, but I am more of a realistic optimist, and remain hopeful that getting our message out will make a real difference. We need to force accountability and responsibility onto our elected officials. We also need to enforce a higher quality standard. I have faith in the American people to recognize that generic responses and 30 second elevator pitches just don’t cut it anymore.

The energy issues facing America demand that type of respect. Our energy policy should also address the needs of protecting our environment, without all of the extremist’s views on either side of the equation. Most Americans understand our basic needs for energy, and our responsibility to protect our planet for our future generations. So, without getting into all of the politically-charged views at either end of the spectrum, this document will address those issues and proposed solutions that fall into that very large mid-range level. Let’s get the basics to the table, and the specifics can be worked out later. Without the framework, an energy policy will never properly exist.

That being said, let’s take a look at the overriding issue, which is energy independence. The term itself has been used so much by various groups that it may not still hold the important resonance that it once had. The overlapping concept of climate and environmental issues has often taken the stage and pushed energy independence to the back. For some time, I have suggested that we can manage both – effectively, efficiently, and immediately. And just as important – our solutions should be first and foremost American!

Being dependent on energy from other countries creates two primary problems; national and financial security. Even as we see oil prices jumping back up to \$80 a barrel, we have to understand that this is not just a concern about how much we are paying at the pumps. It is a concern because we are sending American dollars to other countries, many of whom don’t like us very much. In addition, it is also a problem for national security if we depend too much on these countries for our oil, and watch as the supply dwindles. Not only would the prices skyrocket, but a reduction on our oil supply could potentially cripple our transportation and other energy infrastructures. That’s all fairly straightforward. We need oil – others have it (some are not our friends) – and we’ll suffer greatly if they control that supply and use it against us.

During the summer of 2008, we saw oil prices reach new highs, topping off at over \$147 a barrel. That forced prices at the pump to reach well over \$4 a gallon. With those numbers in mind, it has been calculated that we send more than \$700 billion

out of this country for oil, based on the fact that we now import nearly 70% of our oil. Thirty years ago, we imported 24% of our oil, while the price per barrel was not a major issue.

This is where the need to act now plays such an important role. We have options. We just have to stop playing games and get to work to make a real difference in our energy programs, including some that would only be short-term or interim solutions, easily phased out as the other technologies come “online.” Based on industry figures, at our current rate of consumption of oil around the world, and with no new exploration or drilling proposed, we will run out of oil in 43 years. For more background information and data, please refer to our white paper: ***What Is Alternative Energy***, which is also available online in the Resources section of our websites.

We need to develop a comprehensive energy policy that starts with a basic goal of reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and to initiate those renewable and alternative energy programs that are available now. Our activities can be divided easily into two sections; short term actions and long term planning.

In the short term:

- We need to modify our thinking in terms of how we offer incentives to develop new, efficient forms of alternative fuels and fuel sources
- We need state and local governments to get more involved, and help remove the current roadblocks
- We need to aggressively launch alternative energy programs that are available right now:
  - ✓ Wind turbine power generation - large-scale farms and individual uses, encouraging domestic manufacturing
  - ✓ Solar panel energy, encouraging domestic manufacturing
  - ✓ CNG for transportation, encouraging domestic manufacturing (need to develop conversion programs as well as a retail market infrastructure to offer widespread access for consumers)
  - ✓ Waste-to-energy (WtE) programs, such as the Firebird V-III™ vortex combustion technology
  - ✓ Biomass-fueled power generation (especially woody biomass programs)

For the long term:

- We need to continue to develop battery technology for a broader range of larger vehicles
- Hydrogen fuel cell technology needs to be refined and a retail market infrastructure needs to be developed
- Oil shale exploration and processing, especially in the Green River Formation in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming
- Plasma arc gasification (although currently available, this technology is incredibly expensive and considered by some to be somewhat unstable)
- Initiate research and development programs geared towards enhancing our existing energy resources, and those not fully realized. We need to promote renewable energy programs through our universities, colleges, and trade schools, and encourage our bright young minds to embrace this important and vital work.

In order to finally achieve our goal of having a viable energy policy in this country, we must take action and not simply talk about what needs to be done. We can no longer accept the simple sound bites and campaign promises, but we must insist on our public officials taking the reins on one of the most important issues that we face today. Enough talk! Only actions and progress will be accepted from now on, and we will insist that truly American technology will be used. Our program has two simple aspects: 1) to get elected officials and candidates to stop offering non-substantive and general statements about renewable energy; 2) to get governors to issue executive orders to fast-track permits and other requirements for renewable energy programs. It’s just that simple. People need to put up or shut up! These two simple requests can be initiated with virtually no cost, and will prove that our government officials mean what they say.

America needs real leadership, and the candidate or elected official that finally steps up to the plate and offers meaningful dialogue about our energy needs, will find that voters will respond more to straightforward talking and not the tired old statements and promises. We need to Energize America Now!