



Ranking Member Frank Lucas Speaks to the U.S. House of Representatives in Support of Republican En Bloc Amendment to H.R. 4447

September 24th, 2020

Madam Speaker, my amendment contained within this en bloc emphasizes a critical priority of House Republicans.

It expresses the Sense of Congress that the United States must prioritize investment in domestic energy sources and supply chains, as well as in research and development of exportable next-generation energy technologies. This is absolutely necessary if we are going to maintain U.S. competitiveness in science and technology while reducing emissions. These priorities should play a key role in any realistic and responsible global clean energy strategy.

With the current public health crisis, the need for stable domestic supply chains has never been more important. Whether it's medical supplies or energy sources, we need to be able to depend on our own resources if foreign supply is voluntarily or involuntarily cut off.

That requires us to invest in basic research, which drives breakthrough technologies. For example, due in part to federal investment in R&D that led to new horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing technology, the American shale revolution has led the U.S. to be a net exporter of natural gas since 2018. This is how basic research results in energy independence, an achievement our nation must prioritize for long-term success.

Basic research is also instrumental in the fight against climate change. For emissions reduction technologies like carbon capture, storage, and utilization to be effective, they must be used globally.

Over the past 20 years, Asia has accounted for 90 percent of all coal-fired capacity built worldwide, and these plants have potentially long operational lifetimes ahead of them. We can't force them to change their energy profile and amount of emissions, but we can make cleaner energy technology appealing by making it efficient, inexpensive, and commercially marketable.

If fundamental clean energy research is conducted here in the United States and then developed into deployable technology, we can export the resulting knowledge, tools, or energy itself, as I mentioned with natural gas. By investing in this way, we can grow U.S. industry, reduce our reliance on foreign countries for innovation, and, most importantly, make a significant impact on mitigating the effects of global climate change.

If we want to innovate and we want to export our technologies, we have to focus on breakthrough science, not on propping up mature energy technologies and slowing the deployment of new ones.

I urge my colleagues to support this position, my amendment, and this en bloc. I yield back the balance of my time.