

COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND  
TECHNOLOGY**  
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)  
Hearing on Examining the Science of EPA Overreach: A Case Study in Texas**

**Chairman Smith:** “The devastating impact of EPA’s overreach can be felt from state houses to farmhouses across the nation. Americans are tired of the red tape that hampers economic growth. EPA’s regulatory ambitions threaten states’ rights and intrude on the every-day lives of our citizens.

That’s why today’s hearing is important. And that’s why this is not just a hearing about Texas. The Lone Star State is merely a case study. So while we will hear testimony today from the perspective of several Texans, the chilling impacts of federal intrusion are felt by residents of every state.

Perhaps the worst examples of massive government expansion are found in EPA’s air rules. New regulations rely on unproven technologies and secret science to justify the tremendous costs. Even EPA admits its new power plant rules will have very little benefit; however, they will have a very real impact on the energy bills of hard-working American families.

The EPA’s efforts to demonize hydraulic fracturing are another example of an Agency putting partisan politics above sound science. After recklessly making wild claims of contamination, EPA was forced to retract those claims when the facts came out. The Agency’s “shoot first, ask questions later” attitude is irresponsible.

Clearly, the EPA is too busy expanding its own powers to slow down long enough to listen to its own scientists. This problem is evident with the Agency’s draft Clean Water Act rule. EPA didn’t have time to wait on the Scientific Advisory Board review and instead steamrolled ahead, muzzling voices of dissent along the way.

The EPA’s draft water rule is a massive power grab that undermines state’s rights and gives the federal government control over Americans’ private property. EPA wants to tell Americans what to do in their own back yard.

But states and communities across the country are fighting back to reclaim control of their own resources. For instance, working toward a cleaner environment in Texas does not have to be at the expense of economic growth.

State regulators know how to protect the environment within their borders better than federal employees in Washington DC. Texas has the second largest population in the nation, is home to six of the largest U.S. cities and our economic growth far outpaces the national average. But even with the nation’s largest industrial sector, Texas had made vast improvements in air quality.

For example, from 2000 to 2012, ozone levels in Texas decreased by 23 percent. The rest of the nation averaged an 11 percent decrease in ozone levels.

This success was reached through a collaborative effort that included the Texas state legislature, state agencies, local governments, industry and universities. These groups worked together to design and implement creative and targeted regulatory controls. Localized data provides state regulators with the information they need to create effective, targeted air and water quality management.

Unfortunately, too many within this administration believe that the only way to protect our environment is through federal government intervention and centralized ownership. This is the wrong way.

In the real world, competition drives innovation, private ownership inspires stewardship and smaller government empowers free people. We cannot lose track of these fundamental truths.

Our Constitution requires a collaborative relationship, not a federal take-over. This is why we must listen to voices from the states. It's in everybody's best interest for agencies like the EPA to help support these state efforts, not hinder them.

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