

Coffman Criticizes Salazar for Preventing Domestic Energy Production

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO) today asked U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Ken Salazar tough questions about measures Interior has taken over the last nine months at a House Natural Resources Committee hearing on *The Consolidated Land, Energy, and Aquatic Resources Act of 2009* (H.R. 3534). During the exchange, Coffman criticized the Department of the Interior for effectively delaying or preventing the development of domestic energy production and perpetuating America’s dependence on foreign sources of energy.

“On February 4th you canceled approved oil and gas leases in Utah, on February 10th you essentially restored the moratoria on the Outer Continental Shelf by unreasonably delaying the 5-year leasing program, on February 25th you stifled the development of oil shale by delaying additional oil shale research, demonstration, and development leases, on July 20th you placed a moratorium on mining in an area containing 40% of our nation’s uranium supply, and since taking office your agency hasn’t approved a single new solar project even though the Department is facing a backlog of almost 200 applications,” Coffman stated to Salazar.

Coffman pointedly asked, “So we can’t drill onshore, we can’t drill offshore, we can’t develop oil shale, we can’t develop nuclear, and we can’t develop solar. Mr. Secretary, why won’t you let Americans develop American energy?” Continuing to press Salazar, Coffman stated, “Can you give me a straight answer? Can you provide us with dates?”

Coffman also chided H.R. 3534, known as the CLEAR Act, stating, “This bill is just another example of the Democrats’ ‘more-bureaucracy-more-taxes’ agenda that is simply out of touch with the needs of American people. At a time when Congress should be doing everything possible to encourage job creation and domestic energy production, Democrats put forth another bill that will make it harder to produce American energy and harder for the almost 15 million unemployed Americans to find jobs and afford to heat their homes and fill their gas tanks.”

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