

## Coffman: Salazar Dangerously Unprepared for Energy Crisis

**(WASHINGTON)** – U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO) denounced the 2012 priorities of the Department of the Interior today, charging Interior Secretary Ken Salazar with putting the country's economic recovery and national security at great risk. Coffman questioned Salazar regarding his agency's priorities before the House Natural Resources Committee this morning.

"Everything you talked about today is going to raise the cost of oil and natural gas in the United States to consumers," Coffman said to Salazar during the hearing.

The 2012 Interior budget proposal imposes \$60 billion in fees and taxes on domestic energy production over the next ten years, which is expected to be passed on to consumers in higher energy prices.

"Instead of making it easier for Americans to develop American energy, this Administration is increasing the cost of producing our own energy by tens of billions of dollars, making us even more dependent on foreign oil," Coffman said.

"As a Marine officer I was deployed to the Middle East four times. I saw firsthand how volatile this region was then, and it's even less stable now," Coffman said. "The leaders of those nations have held us hostage for their energy before and we cannot afford to depend on them as instability sweeps across the Middle East."

Coffman then also expressed the need for balance in America's energy production, saying that the Administration is far too biased toward renewable energy sources, leaving our nation unprepared for an energy crisis.

"The Administration's actions to delay, cancel, or reduce current domestic energy production, while only offering distant hope for renewable resources, weakens our energy security," Coffman said.

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