

## Coffman: EPA Regulations Hurting Small Business

**(WASHINGTON)**— Congressman Mike Coffman (R-CO), chairman of the Oversight, Investigations and Regulations Subcommittee for the Small Business Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, in a hearing this week listened to small-business owners from Colorado cry foul over Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations that they say are destroying their ability to grow and create jobs.

“In the midst of a recession, it really defies all common sense that the EPA would move forward with instituting some 30 new costly regulations, without taking into account the job losses they will create,” Coffman said. “The EPA’s complete disregard for the Regulatory Flexibility Act, a federal law designed to protect small businesses from unnecessary federal regulations, is also extremely troubling.”

Coffman called the hearing to determine if the EPA is complying with the Regulatory Flexibility Act, which is intended to protect small businesses from severe government regulations by forcing federal agencies to account for the economic burdens the regulations impose on small business. Currently, unelected bureaucrats at the EPA are attempting to implement a scheme to regulate everything from greenhouse gases to fuel additives.

Glenn Johnston, vice president of regulatory affairs for Gevo Inc., an advanced biofuels company located in Englewood, Colorado, said the EPA regulations in the Clean Air Act are blocking his company from providing a bio-based alternative to petroleum-based fuels.

“Gevo and the Advanced Biofuels industry in general believe that the EPA should review its regulatory regime and to the extent possible should assure that biofuels other than ethanol have equal and unfettered access to the market,” Johnston said.

Johnston says provisions in the Clean Air Act would prohibit the use of isobutanol, a fuel source made from renewable raw materials that could be used as an alternative to gasoline in combustion engines. Gevo is working to develop the fuel, which would lessen our dependency on foreign oil.

Coffman's subcommittee also heard testimony from John Ward, chairman of Citizens for Recycling First in Broomfield, Colorado. Ward said that EPA, through the Resources Conservation and Recovery Act, is hindering the ability to recycle coal ash, a byproduct of burning coal.

Currently, almost half of America's energy is generated from coal and in 2009, 135 tons of coal ash was produced as a result. However, it is possible to recycle coal ash to make concrete and cement.

"In the Agency's single-minded quest to gain more enforcement authority over the disposal of coal ash, EPA appears resolved to ignore the negative impacts of its actions on an entire recycling industry and the small businesses that comprise it," Ward said. "If EPA succeeds in getting the regulations it wants, our nation will end up putting hundreds of millions of tons more material into landfills rather than safely recycling it – hardly a 'green' result."

Coffman said he hopes the hearing will compel the Obama administration to review the negative effects EPA regulations are having on small business growth.

"We heard firsthand from small business owners who are already overwhelmed by a plethora of EPA mandates, not to mention other federal mandates such as Obamacare. The last thing small firms need is more onerous regulations that will prevent them from remaining profitable and unable to create jobs," Coffman said. "Small businesses are the engines that drive our economy and the Obama administration must start recognizing this if they want to get our economy back on the right track."



Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO), center left, chairman of the Oversight, Investigations and Regulations Subcommittee for the House Small Business Committee, and Congressman Jason Altmire (D-PA), ranking member of the Subcommittee, listen to testimony from John Ward of Citizens for Recycling First, foreground left, and Bradford Muller of the Charlotte Pipe and Foundry Company on May 12, 2011.

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