

## **Declaration of Energy Independence**

When it becomes necessary to dissolve the bonds that have restricted economic growth and jeopardized the safety and health of its people, a respect for the future of that nation requires the people should declare the causes that impel them to separate from those factors.

We hold these truths to be critically important: that a responsible and balanced energy policy is essential for our prosperity, and a government that permits itself to lose control of its energy security places at risk its economic independence, national security, and indeed its own destiny. A nation and its government have an obligation to meet the economic needs of its people, to avoid dependence on other nations for its vital resources, and to establish policies which assure the present and future security and prosperity of its citizens.

When a government has set policies that erode that nation's international influence and imperil its own economic and national security, then that government is obligated to thoughtfully and thoroughly review those policies and commit itself to a changed course of action. This nation has failed over several decades to develop and maintain a comprehensive long-term solution to our nation's energy needs. This failure has led to a suffering of its people, its jobs, and its defense, which can no longer be afforded or tolerated, and therefore must change.

Our nation depends on reliable and economical sources of energy to drive our vehicles, light our cities, warm our homes and offices, grow our crops, and manufacture our goods. Yet over the past 20 years our nation has increased its dependence on imported oil by over 40 percent and more than doubled our imports of natural gas while other nations' production of oil and natural gas has increased. Nationalization of their energy resources has distorted markets, influenced business decisions, and attracted industry through artificially-low energy costs. Rising natural gas prices have forced manufacturers to move their operations overseas, causing the loss of thousands of jobs.

These countries can – and do – manipulate world oil and gas exploration and production, leading directly to cost increases. Yet we still prohibit oil exploration and production in Alaska, western states, and within 100 miles of our shores while China and Cuba harvest these resources a mere 60 miles from our coast. Other nations have also used profits from oil sales to directly fund terrorist actions, develop nuclear weapons, and exert political and economic influence that undermines the sovereignty of nations throughout the world.

We have not aggressively pursued the development of our abundant energy resources. Our environmental stewardship in the pursuit of energy has unfortunately come at a cost: other, less-responsible countries are ignoring environmental protection and producing goods at prices with which we cannot compete. We have not adequately addressed the development of new, diverse energy resources and have been shortsighted in our approach toward development of renewable energy sources. We have failed to adopt and reward actions that are known to save energy in our homes, commercial buildings, vehicles, and industries.

***Demands for our current and future energy needs and a compelling interest in providing for our economic and national security dictate that we employ policies that meet energy needs while maintaining a responsible stewardship of our environment and health. The core principles of these policies must be exploration, diversification, conservation, and innovation.***

- We must enlist the power of our nation’s Agriculture to produce a diverse set of domestic, abundant renewable energy resources.
- We must make Appropriations that promote a diverse energy portfolio – one that includes oil, natural gas, clean coal, nuclear, hydropower, solar, wind, and biological fuels – while maintaining full respect for our environmental needs.
- We must provide a sound Education for the next generation of our citizens to inspire innovative ideas and approaches toward a strong energy future, and marshal the forces of Labor to explore, produce, and distribute our domestic energy supplies.
- We must coordinate Energy and Commerce such that innovative, diverse, sensible, and sustainable, market-based solutions to our energy security can be found.
- We must develop policies that provide for our energy security in a manner that allows us to conduct our Foreign Affairs from a position of strength.
- We must create an environment that encourages the exploration and development of our Natural Resources – coal, petroleum, natural gas, water, wind, solar, geothermal, and biological - in an environmentally responsible manner such that we reduce our dependence on foreign oil, lower costs, and permit business to invest that cost savings into conservation, innovation, and diversification.
- We must diligently pursue Oversight and Government Reform to ensure that government itself sets the tone for the nation by demonstrating energy conservation, diversity, and innovation in all our actions.
- We must promote the Science and Technology that makes innovative approaches to conservation, efficiency, and energy diversity possible and to reduce or eliminate harmful emissions from existing energy sources.
- We must reform the design and operation of our Transportation and Infrastructure – vehicles, highways, urban roadways, public transportation, and traffic control measures – to make them more efficient and effective.
- We must enact the Ways and Means of exploring for our own sources of oil and natural gas, renewable energy sources, and clean coal in environmentally safe ways.

***WE THEREFORE*** as a nation bound by a common interest to remain as a free and independent people acknowledging a responsibility to protect our security declare that we must diligently pursue a goal of energy independence through the principles of exploration, diversification, conservation, and innovation. We must understand that our current energy problems have developed over many decades and cannot be transformed overnight; nevertheless, the magnitude of the task should not dissuade us from its pursuit. We must move steadily toward our goal of energy independence without severely damaging our environment or unduly burdening vital, job-producing segments of our economy. We must ensure that sacrifices, when necessary, are broadly shared, but also recognize that with each sacrifice comes an opportunity to innovate and

improve our lives. And for support of this declaration we pledge our commitment to these goals and the formidable tasks required to secure our future.