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[U.S. needs Brazilian approach to energy policy](#)

By House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings

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Earlier this month I had the opportunity to accompany Speaker John Boehner and a bipartisan group of members of Congress on a trip to Latin America. In addition to discussing trade and economic issues with the leaders of Colombia and Mexico, we also traveled to Brazil to focus on energy policies. Brazil is eager to develop their own offshore energy resources and understands the job and economic benefits that come from energy production. It was not hard to contrast the energy policies of Brazil and the Obama Administration and realize that the United States is missing out on incredible opportunities by continuing to lock-up our resources.

The recent discovery of Brazil's abundant deepwater offshore oil reserves, which is estimated to contain a combined 58 billion barrels of oil, has made Brazil an attractive business opportunity for American companies scorned by the Obama administration's job-destroying offshore energy policies. In fact, while in Brazil we met with several U.S. energy companies that are now looking for business in this suddenly natural resources rich country.

President Obama has encouraged Brazil's production of their offshore resources, promising up to \$2 billion to Brazil's state-owned oil company, Petrobras, and went as far as promising to be one of their "best customers." It's unfortunate that President Obama does not express that same enthusiasm for U.S. energy. Certainly, we are better off purchasing energy from our friends in the Western hemisphere rather than the unstable and often hostile Middle East, but we should also be doing everything we can to increase American energy production here at home.

The contrast between the Obama administration and Brazilian energy policies couldn't be more stark. President Obama has driven jobs overseas and compromised America's energy security by actively blocking U.S. energy production, while the Brazilian government has embraced energy production to create jobs, grow their economy and strengthen their

national security. The Brazilians are excited about their energy future, while the Obama Administration is going out of its way to keep people unemployed by actively taking steps to prohibit increased American energy production.

In this last Congress, the House of Representatives passed multiple bipartisan Natural Resources Committee bills that try to capture that same enthusiasm for developing natural resources to spur economic growth. Unfortunately, the Democrat-controlled Senate has refused to take action on our legislation that would create over one million jobs and reduce our dangerous dependence on Middle Eastern oil.

A recent national poll found that over 70 percent of registered voters want increased American oil and natural gas production. So the question is—what are Senate Democrats and the Obama administration waiting for?

In the coming weeks, the House of Representatives will prepare to give the Senate yet another chance at enacting commonsense energy legislation while creating jobs and improving our country's aging infrastructure. The Natural Resources Committee will markup the energy portion of the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act, a bill that will expand U.S. offshore energy production, advance innovative oil shale development and open less than three percent of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil production. The energy portion of this bill will create over 1.2 million American jobs, lower energy prices, strengthen national security and help fund new infrastructure that will support long-term job growth.

Throughout the coming year the Natural Resources Committee will continue to look for ways to responsibly use our nation's abundant natural resources to help put Americans back to work and strengthen our economy while protecting the original multi-use heritage of America's vast public lands.

Americans have suffered through three long years of the Obama administration's draconian energy policies that punish American competitiveness in the energy sector and reward hostile foreign nations. This year, the Natural Resources Committee will look to overturn this Administration's economically devastating energy decisions and chart a new course for increased American energy independence – so that, like Brazil, we can actively work to produce our own energy here at home.

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