

FORT BEND SUN

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Texas, Congress Must Fight Over Greenhouse Gases Rep. Pete Olson

Texas as well as the rest of our nation is under assault from crushing regulations that hinder economic growth, destroy jobs, and increase energy costs for all Americans. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued a new mandate for federal control of greenhouse gas emissions. The rules will apply to new motor vehicles, as well as other sources of greenhouse gases (GHG) including power generating plants, manufacturing facilities, and petrochemical refineries.

The State of Texas rightfully challenged these overreaching rules, calling into question the process under which EPA has opted to enforce this authority. In order to assert control over Texas' permitting process, in 2009 the EPA decided that they erred way back in 1992 in approving the State's plan to issue emission permits. Why? Because EPA said the 1992 plan didn't provide for regulation of greenhouse gasses. But hold it – there was no requirement in 1992, nor any serious thought given to regulate these gasses. Simply put, the plan was never intended to regulate GHG's. But that didn't stop the Obama Administration from making its own rules and interpretation of history.

Texas has the most energy-intensive industrial sector in the nation and will be especially hard-hit by the EPA's actions. Houston is home to hundreds of energy companies that employ thousands of people. As a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, I will do all I can to support our state's fight against the heavy handedness of the EPA.

The EPA's bureaucratic permitting process will result in construction delays for new projects. The increased costs for power plants and refineries to comply will result in companies moving their operations overseas to a less-regulated and lower cost environment. With unemployment in Texas still above 8%, the last thing we need is more federal intrusion that further hinders job growth. Our top priority should be to reduce the cost of doing business so companies can expand their operations and put Americans back to work.

The EPA regulations will also increase the cost of producing energy. When production costs rise, industry is forced to pass these costs onto the consumers. We must ensure that businesses and industries have access to affordable and reliable energy to maintain our competitive edge in an ever-increasing global

marketplace. This requires a stable business climate free of the threat of ill-advised, federally-imposed carbon dioxide emissions regulations.

I intend to remind the Obama Administration that the constitution gives the authority to Congress - not unelected bureaucrats - to determine whether and if greenhouse gases should be regulated.

Furthermore, Texas has improved its air quality, while both seeing a significant population increase and providing a large portion of energy to the US – without a harmful government mandate. The EPA must not be allowed to overstep its authority and enact a misguided policy which will slow American economic growth, eliminate American jobs, and increase the cost of energy. I will continue to oppose harmful government regulations that are bad for Houston, bad for Texas, and bad for the United States.