

February 15, 2012

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Madame Secretary,

Just three weeks ago, President Obama, in his State of the Union address, noted our nation's vast discoveries of natural gas and its extraordinary promise to our economic, energy security and environmental interests. In speaking directly to its environmental benefits and substantial job creation, he said that "development of natural gas will create jobs and power trucks and factories that are cleaner and cheaper, proving that we don't have to choose between our environment and our economy."

In fact, we have seen new plants and new manufacturing jobs created, not overseas, but in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Louisiana, and other states across the country. Recently, PricewaterhouseCoopers and the National Association of Manufacturers published a study on the subject. This study estimates the creation of one million additional U.S. manufacturing jobs through 2025 as a result of the development of shale gas.

So it was disappointing to see that the State Department recently included *Gasland*, a widely scientifically discredited movie attacking American natural gas development, as part of its Annual Film Showcase.

Through its intentionally misleading and alarmist claims, this movie actively works to undermine the progress the president highlighted. There are numerous proven inaccuracies throughout the film, which are detailed at www.anga.us/TruthAboutGasland. Here are a few of the more egregious examples:

- In the movie's most dramatic and misleading moment, a Colorado landowner lights his tap water on fire, leaving the impression that natural gas development is to blame. Yet Colorado regulators investigated the claim long before the film was even shot. Forensic tests found the claims to be untrue and linked the water problems instead to naturally occurring methane that is common in the community's water supply. The filmmaker knew this fact and proceeded with his dramatic and false scene. This fear has cascaded to other states with high levels of naturally occurring methane, such as Pennsylvania, which also has seen an increase in responsible shale gas development.
- John Hanger, then-secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection said the film is "fundamentally dishonest" and "a deliberately false presentation for dramatic effect."
- Also, contrary to the film's misleading claims, natural gas production is subject to federal, state and local regulations that cover everything from initial permits to well construction to water disposal.

The State Department's decision to include *Gasland* in its showcase has lent this movie credibility it does not deserve and will provide it a platform from which the film can spread fear, misinformation and propaganda around the world. The filmmaker is telling the press that his movie was selected because it offers a "balance" to the State Department's Global Shale Gas Initiative. Countering facts and science with fear-mongering and a disdain for the truth is not the example our nation should be holding up to the world of free and public discourse.

As Americans, we are proud of our country's principles of democracy and freedom celebrated by the Department's film program. But we must vigorously object to the selection of a film that has been widely discredited by scientists and regulators and has done significant damage to a science and fact-based discourse about the risks and benefits of our energy choices as a nation.

Showcasing this film around the world is at odds with the president's push for responsible development and science-based decisions about energy and environmental policy. It also undercuts the State Department's own diplomatic efforts and weakens the vast promise that shale gas development holds out to our country and the world to create jobs and power economic growth, all while giving us cleaner air and greater global energy security.

We are here to share the facts and science around U.S. leadership in safe and responsible development of natural gas. The facts are that the U.S. is home to one of the largest natural gas reserves in the world and nearly 70 percent of our domestic natural gas development is due to the latest technologies applied by hydraulic fracturing. We must, therefore, strongly request that you immediately remove this deeply flawed film from this program.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this critical request.

Respectfully,

Regina Hopper
President and CEO
America's Natural Gas Alliance

Jack Gerard
President and CEO
American Petroleum Institute

Dave McCurdy
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American Gas Association

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