



**Barry Russell**  
President and CEO

June 18, 2018

The Honorable Rob Bishop  
Chairman  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop,

The Independent Petroleum Association of America (IPAA) appreciates the opportunity to speak in favor of the common-sense onshore regulatory reform bills before the Committee for markup. IPAA is the leading, national upstream trade association representing thousands of independent oil and natural gas producers, as well as the service and supply industries that support their efforts across the United States. Many IPAA member companies – small businesses with an average of 12 employees – actively produce oil and natural gas from leases on federally-controlled lands throughout the Intermountain West.

The suite of bills scheduled to be marked up on June 20 before the full Committee will provide much-needed certainty and assurances for our member companies and those who safely operate on public lands. In recent years, it has become difficult for IPAA member companies to remain in business and continue operating on public lands as the federal regulatory process has become exceedingly cumbersome and costly. The use of categorical exclusions and authorizing notifications of permits to drill will remove federal bureaucratic barriers and provide increased certainty to IPAA member companies seeking to responsibly operate on public lands. Furthermore, amending the Mineral Leasing Act to clarify the amount of subsurface federal mineral estate needed to require a federal permit will add clarity and indeed reduce permit wait times for producers whose mineral estate is fractionally owned by the federal government.

The U.S. oil and natural gas industry produces nearly 10.5 million barrels per day of oil, according to the Energy Information Administration. Eliminating bureaucratic and costly obstacles to safe and responsible oil and natural gas development will promote U.S. job growth, enhance American energy production, strengthen our national security, and increase revenues for federal, state, and tribal governments. These federal dollars are vital for many western economies and are used to fund state and local priorities, such as public safety, education, and infrastructure projects like roads and bridges.

IPAA applauds the Committee for taking the necessary steps to ensure federal permitting reform is codified into law and, therefore, cannot be changed by the whims of an Administration who aligns with

the environmental or “keep it in the ground” movement. The American people win when U.S. energy development on public lands is conducted in a responsible and robust manner. Our member companies provide an invaluable stream of revenue to the federal treasury through royalties, rental fees, bonus bids, and lease sales.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your leadership on these important issues. We applaud your keen interest in ensuring our industry remains smartly regulated and ensuring oil and gas production on public lands stays as attractive as state and private lands. We appreciate the effort and attention that you and each of these bill sponsors have given to correct these regulatory issues through forward-thinking legislative solutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Russell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Barry" being more prominent than the last name "Russell".

Barry Russell  
President & CEO  
Independent Petroleum Association of America