

Fossil Fuels, Energy Policy, and Common Sense

Smith, W. Hoxie ¹ (1) Petroleum Professional Development Center, Midland College, Midland, TX.

W. Hoxie Smith, P.G.,C.P.G. Director, Midland College - PPDC

Energy independence has been a popular slogan in recent political races and in current considerations of developing U.S. energy policy. Energy policymakers need to develop a clear path forward based on an informed understanding of our domestic energy options, and by development of common sense solutions for addressing the perceived impact of carbon emissions on global warming. It is crucial that these solutions allow us to maintain a vibrant economy sustaining our standard of living at home and raising the standard of living of emerging economies abroad. A near-sighted rush to renewable energy and implementation of a carbon cap and trade system that burdens our energy industry while expanding government regulation may have detrimental effects that are not intended. U.S. domestic reserves of natural gas have grown by 35% over the last few years and additional untapped unconventional natural gas reserves are being recognized in new shale plays. This presentation will look at the impact that natural gas can have for our domestic energy needs, the role of fossil fuels in the world energy picture, and common sense approaches to meet the world's energy needs while being good stewards of the environment. We will also consider the role of clean coal technology, nuclear, biomass, wind, and solar resources in meeting our country's future energy needs.