

COMMITTEES

ENERGY AND COMMERCE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
CHAIRMAN

SELECT COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND
GLOBAL WARMING
CHAIRMAN

NATURAL RESOURCES

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2107

November 10, 2010

Dear Democratic Colleague:

In the 112th Congress I have decided to exercise my seniority rights to become a candidate for the Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee. I am writing to ask you for your support.

I have served on the Natural Resources Committee since my election in 1976 and have been the next senior member eligible for the Chairmanship or Ranking Membership since 1999. Each Congress since then, I have chosen not to exercise my seniority right to become the Ranking Member or Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee. This allowed me to maintain a key Subcommittee ranking or chairmanship post on the Energy and Commerce Committee when we Democrats were in the minority.

When Democrats assumed the majority in 2006, Speaker Pelosi asked me to take on a special assignment -- that of chairing a new Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. I agreed to do so, and in the next four years, the Select Committee held more than 75 oversight and investigative hearings. Our hearings focused on the threat that global warming poses to our environment and our economy, on the opportunities that the burgeoning clean energy sector affords to create new jobs and economic growth, and on strategies for reducing our nation's dangerous and costly dependence on imported oil. Much of what we learned during our hearings and investigations was subsequently incorporated into the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act, the Economic Recovery Act, and the House-passed American Clean Energy and Security Act.

Now that the Republicans may choose to eliminate the Select Committee, and our colleague Nick Rahall has decided to exercise his seniority rights to assume the Ranking position over at the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I am seeking the Ranking Member position at the Natural Resources Committee. I do so because I believe the twin issues of energy and the environment will be of paramount importance in the next Congress, and the Natural Resources Committee will be a critical forum in which the national debate over these issues will be played out.

As you know, I worked hard during the 12 years that Democrats were last in the minority to take back control of the House, and once that effort was successful, I worked just as hard to maintain our Majority. I have traveled, I have raised funds, and I have contributed to the DCCC and our candidates every year. When you add it all up, I believe I have done as much as or more for the DCCC over the last 16 years than any other Member of the House who is not in the leadership.

I also have worked to create a strong Democratic message on energy and the environment. I believe that as our party fights its way back from the losses we suffered in the recent election, it will be important for us to continue to advocate for policies that reduce our dependence on imported oil and address the challenges posed by global warming. As you know, today over 30 percent of all energy in the United States is produced on public lands overseen by the Interior Department. Our environment is affected in profound ways by decisions we make regarding our rivers and lakes and oceans. The survival of our endangered species, our fishing stocks, our national forests, our coastal zones and our last patches of untrammelled wilderness depend on wise management today. These broad policy issues make the Natural Resources Committee a critical forum for debating and guiding national policy regarding the balance of our economic, energy and environmental priorities for both today and in the decades ahead.

I believe that as we move into the minority, Democrats on the Natural Resources Committee must continue to be a voice for protecting our natural environment, crafting a forward-looking national energy policy, and ensuring responsible stewardship over public lands. Over the last several years, I have used my Membership on the Committee to investigate the BP oil spill, to prevent oil companies from continuing to drill on public lands "royalty free" even during times of high energy prices. I led the successful effort to block the Bush Administration from opening the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling, and I have fought to protect the mission of our National Marine Sanctuaries from commercial pressures, and to preserve the integrity of the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The Natural Resources Committee also has major responsibilities for oversight over the Department of Interior, management of the outer continental shelf, oil and gas drilling and renewable energy development on public lands, including on the outer continental shelf, the leases on which the Land and Water Conservation Fund depends, national parks and national forests, historic preservation, Indian affairs and our five territories. Grazing rights, water rights, and the health of our mining communities also need to be managed wisely.

I look forward to working with my Democratic colleagues to ensure that each and every one of these issues receives the attention and advocacy of the Committee, so that we produce legislation that will benefit our environment, our economy, and the American people for generations to come. Finally, I will continue to do my utmost to support and assist our Democratic Members, so that in two years we can take back our Majority in the House and ensure it lasts.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,



Ed Markey