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## **[House Republicans Press for Faster Action on Renewable Energy](#)**

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Jim Snyder

U.S. House Republicans, who have sought to expedite offshore oil- and gas-drilling permits, pressed the Obama administration to act faster on renewable energy projects.

Federal hurdles are slowing growth of solar and wind companies, industry executives said today at a [House Natural Resources Committee hearing](#) in Washington. The witnesses also advocated tax incentives and production mandates criticized by Republicans, who control the House.

“Bureaucratic delays, unnecessary lawsuits and burdensome environmental regulations” are hampering expansion of renewable energy, as they have for oil and gas producers, said Committee Chairman Doc Hastings, a Republican from Washington state.

Hastings’s panel has already passed legislation designed to expand oil and gas production offshore, including an accelerated approval process for drilling permits. The bills passed the House before being blocked in the Senate, where Democrats hold a majority.

Susan Reilly, chief executive officer of Renewable Energy Systems Americas Inc., of Broomfield, Colorado, said Interior Department protection from wind turbines for golden eagles will “make financing projects more difficult.”

The Obama administration proposed guidelines in February to help wind-energy developers identify sites that pose the least risks to birds and wildlife.

Collisions with wind turbines are a “major source of mortality” for golden eagles in regions of the U.S. West, according to a department fact sheet.

### **Developing Public Lands**

Hastings asked witnesses if the Interior Department had an efficient and effective process for reviewing permits for developing public lands.

While most responded no, executives also praised the Obama administration for improving the procedures and focusing more attention on renewable energy.

They commended policies like a Treasury Department grant program for renewable developers set to expire later this year and an Obama plan to generate 80 percent of U.S. electricity from low-polluting sources by 2035.

The Interior Department is “picking up the pace” on offshore wind, said Jim Lanard, president of the Offshore Wind Development Coalition.

Reilly said clean-energy mandates and a predictable tax policy would promote investment.

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