

**Mr. Sensenbrenner's Opening Statement for Select
Committee on Energy Independence and Global
Warming hearing: "Energy and Global Warming
Solutions for Vulnerable Communities."**

Oct. 18, 2007

Today's hearing will focus on the plight of those who are in the path of nature. From the coastlines of the Gulf of Mexico to erosion in Alaska to rising seas around the Maldives, these problems are real and threaten real people. And like many on this panel, I have concern for those people whose homes and livelihoods are being affected by this change in nature.

But I am also concerned that today's hearing will do little to offer constructive and realistic solutions to these

problems. Rising waters may well be an effect of global warming, but just how can we get these waters to recede?

The answer many will offer today is regulation, regulation, regulation. It is as if some people believe that government regulation and taxes will have the same gravitational pull on the oceans that the moon does. They do not.

As we look for ways to address the global warming problem, what we are looking for are ways to produce energy and to power transportation without emitting carbon dioxide. It is my hope that researchers can soon develop the kinds of breakthrough technologies that will allow people all over the world to enjoy cheap, clean energy.

New energy and transportation technologies have the potential to lower energy costs, improve the environment and end the world's reliance on unstable countries for energy fuels. That is the type of win-win solution that Republicans like me are seeking.

It seems many people believe that by enacting regulations, the work on the global warming problem will be complete, and that waters will miraculously ebb. They will not.

As we have already seen, regulations have done little to lower the CO₂ emissions in Europe, with one recent report showing that so far, all of Europe's regulatory efforts have actually led to a 1 percent rise in emissions.

Additionally, anecdotal evidence shows that aside from some outfits that sell carbon credits, the regulations aren't doing much to help Europe's economy either. It goes without saying that the European regulations are doing nothing to help keep water levels down.

I do not wish to make light of the dangers faced by communities who are in the path of nature. But I do not think that regulatory measures that make energy much more expensive are the answer that will save places like the Maldives.

My concern is that by enacting tough cap-and-trade regulations without having the needed developments in energy technology, we will see dramatic rises in energy prices that will threaten the jobs and economy of not just

the poor, but everyone. My fear is that in 100 years, people in this country will continue to battle high energy prices while the people of the Maldives continue to battle high water levels.

That is what I would call a lose-lose scenario, and Congress should seek to avoid it.

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