



March 2, 2009

The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison
United States Senate
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hutchison:

On behalf of the approximately 3,200 members of the Texas Alliance of Energy Producers, I would like to take this opportunity to clarify the advantages of using natural gas versus coal as an energy source for our nation.

Natural gas is the cleanest fossil fuel. Texans recognized years ago the many strategic benefits of natural gas over coal. First, natural gas is produced, transported and sold in Texas by Texans. Texas is now the No. 1 producer of natural gas, and also the largest consumer of natural gas in the country.

The total positive economic impact natural gas has on the State of Texas is very large, which includes hundreds of thousands of jobs, payments of taxes and royalties to the state, payments to the Rainy Day Fund, and financing the Permanent School and Permanent University Funds. Schools and communities around the State of Texas directly benefit from the natural gas industry.

Coal, on the other hand, is the dirtiest fossil fuel, and accounts for almost 40 percent of the carbon dioxide emissions in the U.S. It is the largest source of sulfur dioxide pollution, and the second largest source of nitrogen oxides, which greatly contributes to creating smog in our country. "Clean coal" is a marketing tool, because no one really has a definition for "clean" coal, or even when "clean" coal technology will become available. Even after spending approximately \$2 billion of federal tax funds during the last decade, scientists at the Department of Energy can't answer the "clean coal" question.

The facts remain that natural gas is much cleaner than coal. It is more plentiful, and new technology to produce gas from unconventional sources, like the Barnett Shale in North Texas, will provide natural gas supplies for many years.

The economic impact of natural gas – from the large number of jobs created to the money paid to local and state governments – is a win / win situation for the State of Texas. Texas companies are providing clean energy to Texas homes and businesses.

Thank you for your attention to this very important issue. Please contact the Texas Alliance if you have any questions, or would like to discuss this further. We appreciate your service to the citizens of the State of Texas.

Sincerely,

Mark Metzler
Alliance Chairman

Alex Mills
Alliance President