

Having lived near Lake Michigan for my entire life, I know first hand how important it is to protect our nation's natural resources. Today, our nation faces unprecedented environmental and energy challenges. As a member of the [Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition](#), as well as a member of the [House Energy and Commerce Committee](#), I am committed to ensuring that Congress passes legislation that ensures that our national treasures, like Michigan, remain intact for generations to enjoy.

### *Climate Change*

Climate change is the most serious threat to our environment, our health, and our way of life. Scientists have predicted that dangerous and irreversible climate change will occur if the Earth's temperature rises more than 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit. Already, we are seeing the drastic effects of climate change, with melting ice caps, species migrating north, and violent storms increasing in number and intensity. Even higher temperatures could flood major coastal cities around the world, contaminate freshwater sources, and subject all people to dangerous rays from the sun.

As a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee I worked closely with my colleagues to pass [H.R. 2454, American Clean Energy and Security Act](#) (ACES) last year. This bill is a comprehensive approach to America's energy policy that will create millions of new clean energy jobs, save consumers hundreds of billions of dollars in energy costs, enhance America's energy independence, and cut global warming pollution.

### *The BP Oil Spill at Deepwater Horizon Rig*

I am horrified by damage caused by the oil that gushed into the Gulf of Mexico in the aftermath of the accident at BP's Deepwater Horizon oil rig. When I visited the Gulf region in June for a [field hearing held by the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations](#)

, I witnessed first-hand the environmental destruction and economic and emotional toll this tragedy has taken on the people of the region.

I am committed to ensuring that BP is held responsible for the costs of the spill and ensuring that the lives of those who live and work in the Gulf are made whole. As a member of the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee I have [p](#)

[articulated in numerous hearings on the spill.](#)

I also visited the Gulf in June to inspect the site first hand.

Beyond holding BP accountable, it is imperative that the United States implement a new energy policy that weans off of fossil fuels like oil and gas, and invests in clean, domestically generated, renewable energy sources like biofuels, wind and solar power. The American Clean Energy and Security Act mandates that at least 17 percent of our nation's power must come from renewable energy sources by 2020. I will continue to support the research and development of clean renewable energy.

### **Some of my key actions on the environment:**

I introduced [H.R. 2190, the Mercury Pollution Reduction Act](#) . Mercury is an extremely dangerous neurotoxin which is known to cause problems during fetal development and in growing children. It also can have toxic effects on adults. While there has been much focus on reducing mercury pollution from coal burning power plants, the average mercury chlor-alkali plant emits four times more mercury than the average power plant.

Furthermore, unlike coal, existing technology is readily available to completely eliminate mercury pollution from these plants. Already, over 90 percent of the chlorine manufactured in the United States is made using mercury-free methods. H.R. 2190 would force the four remaining chlor-alkali plants in the United States who use mercury to transition to existing, cleaner technologies by 2015.

I am a cosponsor of [H.R. 832, Superfund Polluter Pays Act](#) . This bill would reinstitute the Superfund Tax on oil and chemical companies. The funds would be used to pay for the cleanup of waste sites for which no responsible party could be found to foot the cleanup bill. The Superfund was used effectively to protect the public's health from exposure to toxins until the Republican-lead Congress allowed the provision to expire in 1995.

### Letters I have signed

[Letter to Secretary Clinton](#) Urging the State Department to consider the environmental impact of approving the proposed Keystone XL tar sands oil pipeline.

[Letter to Obama administration officials](#) regarding the detection of genetic material from Asian Carp in the Great Lakes.

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[Building the Economy- The American Clean Energy and Security Act](#)