

We Need an Energy Day!

October 2011

This country's **debt crisis and high unemployment have taken over the sound bites** from Congress, the Administration, media, and political hopefuls. Of course, with the US national debt approaching \$15 trillion and unemployment stubbornly over 9%, this is to be expected.

With US retail gasoline prices dropping to the mid \$3 per gallon level, **strategic energy policy discussions have largely fallen off the table**. This is par for the course; we always attack our energy challenge when it is a crisis rather than trying to strategically prevent the crisis from occurring. Last time I checked, a doubly of energy demand over the next fifty years is still a reasonable projection.

We actually may have some relief at the pump on the way for this coming decade as technology from gas shale moves over to oil shale. Tom Fowler's article earlier this week describes a world that few would have predicted at the turn of the century with the potential for North American oil output topping a 40-year-old peak. That would be **a big boost for energy security**.

But with the focus on solving the debt crisis, **we are doing energy policy in reverse**. Let's de-incentivize oil & gas development in this country through significant tax increases not considering the unintended or perhaps intended consequences. The Solyndra debacle will likewise bring about knee jerk policy reactions rather than thinking intelligently about how to produce a balanced energy portfolio in this country. When are we going to fully grasp that **energy is the lifeblood of developed economies**? We need a special day to celebrate energy and its role in producing our wonderful standard of living.

Well thanks to the Consumer Energy Alliance, the City of Houston, and seventy-four partners/sponsors, **we will have an Energy Day right here in Houston, Texas on October 15, 2011**. That Saturday will feature over forty exhibits at downtown Hermann Square right in front of Houston's City Hall. There will be lots of cool exhibits across the energy spectrum with state-of-the-art technology showcasing energy innovation, efficiency, and conservation.

Energy Day is for everyone and includes live music, prizes, food, and fun for all. It will be especially great for kids with demonstrations and booths focused on energy-related scientific breakthroughs. In previous blogs, I have talked about the significant need for developing our next generation energy workforce given the potential of half today's workforce retiring within the next decade. So, there will also be opportunities to learn about energy careers.

The good news is Energy Day is free. It starts at 11 AM and ends at 5 PM. **Energy Day provides a terrific opportunity for us to showcase Houston as the energy hub that really powers this nation.** Make every effort to be there two weeks from this Saturday.