

**Remarks by API President and CEO Mike Sommers  
U.S. Energy Association Annual State of the Energy Industry Forum  
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Thank you, Sheila, for the introduction, and thank you all for the opportunity to get together to discuss America's exciting energy future at the start of a critical year for our nation.

I'd like to kick this event off with a quick bipartisan moment, if you'd please direct your attention to the monitors.

**[\[Presidents Video\]](#)**

Champions for everything from wind and solar to nuclear and coal will follow my remarks today, and I think they'd all agree – everybody can find *somebody* to like in that video.

From President Carter to President Trump, 40-plus years packs in plenty of different ideologies, but all seven leaders shared a common goal: energy security for America.

Each of those presidents knew that clean, affordable, and reliable American energy is essential to both economic growth and national security.

For decades, U.S. energy policy has focused on reducing our dependence on foreign natural gas and oil. The outlook was often pessimistic, defined by scarcity rather than surplus.

Times have changed, thanks to a U.S. energy revolution that's full speed ahead.

Now, finally, Americans get most of our energy right here at home, thanks in large part to natural gas and oil. We're again able to celebrate our independence as America achieves this bipartisan goal with hard work, grit, and determination.

The State of the Energy Industry in 2020 is one of U.S. leadership in three key ways – energy development, emissions reductions, and environmental performance. The natural gas and oil industry sees all three as top priorities, and we're executing on all of them at the same time.

First, on energy development, America is now the number one producer of natural gas and oil. Last year, for the first time since the 1950s, the U.S. became a net *exporter* of total energy.

Second, on reducing emissions, thanks in part to the strength of cleaner-burning natural gas, forecasters expect energy-related carbon dioxide emissions to decrease even further this year and next, just as we saw in 2019.

Third, on environmental performance, our industry knows bold and achievable action on climate change at the global level is essential. America's natural gas and oil industry is committed to innovations that stand to transform these ambitions into more than hopes and dreams.

For example, API supports widespread implementation of carbon-capture, utilization, and storage technology. We're partnering with the best minds in technology, data analytics, and engineering. And API proudly launched the Environmental Partnership two years ago to share and design new methods for reducing methane emissions in energy production.

But our industry's hardworking problem solvers are nowhere near finished. Natural gas and oil supports 10.9 million American jobs and we're charging ahead to meet our toughest economic and climate challenges.

Simultaneously, U.S. energy leadership offers stability in chaotic times and insulates America from unreliable suppliers of energy.

We saw this reality in action just a few weeks ago. America's vast energy resources helped stave off economic turmoil and price hikes at the pump when our nation stood on the brink of war with Iran.

A few years ago, such stability would be unheard of. How did it happen?

You can thank the shale revolution and the sheer fact that American oil production doubled over the last decade. That surge means we import millions fewer barrels of oil per day from other nations.

The international value of energy leadership is compelling. But zoom in to see progress closer to home, from the smallest American communities to our biggest cities. U.S. natural gas and oil is powering modern life for people across our nation – reviving regions, energizing economies, and improving millions of lives. Three examples illustrate that power.

In New Mexico, energy abundance is supporting agriculture, infrastructure, and education. According to the New Mexico Oil and Gas Association, statewide companies contributed more than \$3.1 billion to the state's general fund in 2019. That's money for schools, bridges, water treatment plants, and a number of other critical state and local priorities. And Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham has proposed free college tuition for all state residents – funded by natural gas and oil revenues.

In Pennsylvania and Ohio, America's natural gas and oil revolution is refueling manufacturing and growing local economies. Energy development in the Marcellus Shale has helped drive the unemployment rate in Pennsylvania down from a high of more than 8% to 4.3%.

And in Michigan, the energy sector helps to maintain economic stability in key industries. Abundant natural gas and oil helps to stimulate broad growth, translating into more business and job opportunities in energy and manufacturing. For example, Lansing community leaders told us that energy infrastructure helped convince U.S. auto manufacturers to stay.

This is great progress, but none of it is guaranteed to continue. Keeping the State of the Energy Industry healthy depends on making the right policy choices and working together to ensure access to reliable resources across our nation.

Thinking about those choices, I'd like to stress three points:

- Advancing shared policy priorities will allow our industries to keep pace with rising energy demand.
- Addressing the growing political divide will help to achieve smart energy solutions.
- And acknowledging that energy progress is not done alone.

No matter which presidential candidate you support, we can all come together on specific policy priorities. For example, America could unlock an estimated \$1 trillion in new private infrastructure investments to safely and efficiently deliver energy from where it is to where it isn't.

To do that, our lawmakers need to adopt new guidelines that protect the environment, cut red tape, and avoid unnecessary delays.

Reforming the National Environmental Policy Act is a critical step toward meeting growing demand for cleaner energy and unleashing job-creating infrastructure projects delayed by bureaucracy.

We're also thrilled to see House and Senate passage of the USMCA trade deal. Supporting 12 million jobs and generating nearly \$1.4 trillion in 2018, trade with both our neighbors bolsters U.S. exports of gasoline, crude oil, fuel blending components, and more.

We commend the administration and members of both parties for supporting American workers and energy consumers by bringing USMCA across the legislative finish line. We look forward to the President signing it into law.

When we fight for smart policy on issues like infrastructure, trade, and carbon-capture, it isn't a Washington game. We want real energy progress in American communities large and small.

Our energy future can unite Democrats, Republicans, and independents alike. And that is the spirit of everything we do at API and across our industry. I'm confident that everyone can get behind energy security and protecting our planet. It takes a blend of both to keep America ahead of the global pack.

It's clear that meeting energy demand and making environmental progress won't get done online, in overheated campaign speeches, or with political back-and-forth in the daily news. Instead, it takes hard work to deliver affordable, reliable, cleaner energy while addressing the risks of climate change. But we can do it together.

If they could be here today, I think all seven presidents would agree: The convening power in this room shows the strong State of the Energy Industry. All of us wake up every morning with the unique opportunity to deliver progress to businesses and families nationwide. I look forward to continuing to work together to make it happen.

Thank you.