

Rep. John Salazar
1531 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Salazar:

The Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States (IPAMS) shares your interest in minimizing the environmental impact of energy development on the Roan Plateau. We were, however, extremely disappointed to learn about the closed-door meeting that you and Rep. Mark Udall have planned with special interest groups on February 22nd to discuss alternatives to a decade-long public planning process for the management of natural gas development on a small portion of the Roan Plateau.

We would appreciate the opportunity to send a delegate to this meeting and we encourage you to expand your list of invitees to include other stakeholders. After all, if you are thinking about creating a new proposal for energy development, it might not be a bad idea to invite someone with expertise in the field who understands what's feasible and technically possible.

We've been inundated with calls from some of the thousands of energy producers, suppliers, contractors, and service companies in your district who are worried that your actions are a first step towards taking away the high paying jobs that have allowed them to own homes, educate their children, and in general enjoy a standard of living that they otherwise could not afford.

We know you understand the socio-economic benefits that our industry brings to your district. According to a recent article in the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel*, oil and gas companies are investing \$211,000,000 in your district, helping to provide jobs that pay an average of \$50,000 to working families in your district. In addition, oil and gas development provided \$134 million in severance taxes and \$147 million in royalties to Colorado, much of which is used for education, community-based projects, and environmental protection.

If you restrict development, you will not only endanger countless livelihoods but also drive up the cost of energy to your constituents who use natural gas everyday to heat their homes, cook their food, and light their offices. Narrowly focused, closed door hearings disguised as a 'public meetings' that thwart the public process are not likely to result in

the balanced governance your constituents expect. As Rep. Udall said in regards to Vice President Cheney's Energy Task Force, you "shouldn't rig the process to give special treatment to special interests."

The thousands of working families in the Colorado oil and gas industry are counting on you to at least provide them with a seat at the table when discussing their future. Surely you can extend to them the same courtesy you do to the special interests who would like nothing more than to see an end to all energy development in Colorado.

Sincerely,

Marc W. Smith
Executive Director