

Home » Media Center » Press Releases

## Markey Questions Natural Gas Shale Reserves



*Asks EIA for Methodology, Materials Supporting Bullish Fuel Claims*

JUN 27, 2011

WASHINGTON (June 27, 2011) – Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) today asked the energy experts working for the United States government to justify their bullish claims on natural gas resources and reserves in light of reports in [The New York Times](#) indicating skepticism exists within the Energy Information Administration (EIA) about its own estimates. In a letter to the head of the EIA, Rep. Markey asked how the agency was justifying optimistic estimates of domestic natural gas production, especially from shale gas formations that require the increasingly-scrutinized technique called hydraulic fracturing to extract the trapped fuel, in light of the revelations.

**“We need to know whether the natural gas located underneath the surface is a real source of fuel for the next generation, or a speculative bubble hyped by the oil and gas industry, and echoed by the federal government’s energy experts,”**said Rep. Markey, the Ranking Member of the Natural Resources Committee and a senior member of the Energy and Commerce Committee. **“Natural gas has been touted as a ‘bridge fuel’ that will take us from dirtier fossil fuels to cleaner renewable energy technologies. If these claims are accurate, natural gas could offer a viable pathway towards meeting our energy needs while reducing carbon dioxide pollution. If they are not, America’s natural gas future could be a bridge to nowhere.”**

In the letter, Rep. Markey asks EIA for the methodology and supporting materials behind the agency’s estimates regarding natural gas reserves. Because [The New York Times](#) stories say that natural gas-sources studies and estimates that form the basis for some of EIA’s official estimates, Rep. Markey asks for any information regarding contractors working with EIA on these estimates, EIA’s relationship with the contractors, and the information gleaned from these gas industry representatives.

**“It’s one thing to see the prospects for American natural gas through rose-colored glasses. It’s another thing for the natural gas industry and regulators to put blinders on the American people,”**said Rep. Markey. **“We don’t need near-sighted industry optimism. Instead, let’s discover the reality of our domestic natural gas reserves, and plan our energy future accordingly.”**

The full text of the letter can be found [HERE](#).