America can’t afford to keep developing new fossil fuel infrastructure.

The Keep It in the Ground Act (HR.2519/S.1115) would eliminate new fossil fuel production on federal lands and waters, barring imminent national security threats.

Preventing new fossil fuel development is critical to curbing emissions. The International Energy Agency has stated that the only viable path toward zero-emissions is an immediate halt to new oil, gas, and coal projects. The emissions contained in developed fossil reserves will already reach our global “carbon budget.”

Expanding production of fossil fuels is losing popularity. The Washington Post found that the majority of Americans, regardless of party affiliation, support decreased drilling on federal lands and waters. A study by Pew Research Center found that 79% of Americans support developing clean energy over fossil fuels.

Fossil energy projects are major health and environmental hazards. Hydraulic fracturing, a technique used to extract natural gas and oil, injects potent chemicals into groundwater and disrupts geological processes. Fracking also emits high concentrations of methane and other hazardous air pollutants. Offshore and onshore oil drilling sites are susceptible to potentially catastrophic oil spills and explosions. Gas pipelines leak methane at a rate that may exceed the EPA estimate by 5x, while oil pipelines can disrupt previously untouched ecosystems and inevitably leak, contaminating human drinking water and agriculture.

The fossil fuel industry is a poor financial investment. Economic forecasting has consistently predicted diminishing returns across the oil, gas, and coal industries, and some major financial institutions have already begun persuading investors to move away from fossil fuel-backed securities. According to Nature Climate Change, the volatility of the industry may be contributing to a “carbon bubble” that could spark a financial crisis as the cost of fossil fuels continues to sharply decline.

Specifically, the Keep It in the Ground Act would:

- Stop new leases and end non-producing leases for coal, oil, gas, oil shale, and tar sands on all federal lands.
- Stop new leases and end non-producing leases for offshore drilling in the Pacific and Gulf of Mexico.
- Prohibit offshore drilling in the Arctic and the Atlantic.