



## T. Boone Pickens Media Coverage 8.13.11 – 8.15.11

**Total of 2 Placements** • Print: 2

### Coverage Summary

Tulsa World has an editorial from columnist Mike Jones imploring lawmakers to pass the NAT GAS Act. Jones states that the benefits of CNG are well-known and indisputable, and that the legislation is the only energy bill in Congress with a likelihood of passing. Jones points out that in addition to the national security and environmental advantages, the bill will create a large amount of new jobs and carry strong economic benefits.

Deseret News has an editorial calling on lawmakers to pass the NAT GAS Act in conjunction with tight regulations on fracking. The editorial states that Pickens is correct to point out that the U.S. is strengthening its enemies through its addiction to foreign oil. The editorial continues by stating that the U.S. has a compelling national security reason for nudging the market towards natural gas.

**Highlighted Placements (Full Articles Below) • NAT GAS Act a step toward energy independence – Tulsa World –**

8/14/11 [http://www.tulsaworld.com/opinion/article.aspx?subjectid=213&articleid=20110814\\_213\\_G6\\_MoStev148769](http://www.tulsaworld.com/opinion/article.aspx?subjectid=213&articleid=20110814_213_G6_MoStev148769) • Study 'fracking' – Deseret News (Salt Lake City, UT) –

8/13/11 <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700170488/Study-fracking.html>

### HIGHLIGHTED COVERAGE

**NAT GAS Act a step toward energy independence – Tulsa World – 8/14/11**

By Mike Jones, Associate Editor

Most everyone can agree that something needs to be done about the damage that importing foreign oil is doing to the economy. Unfortunately, not everyone can agree on how to ease the pain of that damage.

There is, however, one good idea that has been in Congress for two years that just might finally have the votes to pass. The NAT GAS Act looks to have the votes in the House and Senate to be approved. President Barack Obama has indicated that he will sign the bill if it gets to his desk.

The bill, authored by First District U.S. Rep. John Sullivan, is supported by T. Boone Pickens, a devoted proponent of using compressed natural gas to fuel vehicles. The benefits of CNG are well-known and indisputable. That, however, doesn't stop those with deep pockets and vested interests from doing what they can to derail this important piece of legislation.

Tough opponent

Pickens and Sullivan are up against a formidable opponent, Koch Industries. The Koch brothers, David and Charles of Wichita, Kan., have financed a campaign to kill the NAT GAS Act.

It must be said that Koch Industries is a successful company that employs thousands of Americans and the Koch brothers are generous philanthropists. That, however, does not make them immune to criticism.

The loudest voice in the halls of Congress and the biggest critic of the NAT GAS Act is the American Conservative Union. The ACU's main benefactor is Koch. And here is why Koch is against the NAT GAS Act, other than its anemic anti-government reasoning:

Koch imports crude oil. The lower the price it can pay for foreign oil, the better its bottom line. The Koch brothers rail against government subsidies and interference but willfully accept government ethanol subsidies to prop up their fertilizer business. The company also relies on cheap natural gas. Any measure that might, might, increase the cost of CNG, could affect Koch's fertilizer holdings.

The Koch brothers' ability to raise money, lots of it, is legendary. And they use it to fund anti-government, ultra-conservative causes, such as the tea party movement.

Sullivan, meanwhile, continues the fight in the face of political threats from the ACU. Sullivan, who has always received high marks from the group for his conservative positions and votes in the House, now

finds himself on the wrong side of the ACU.

It has launched a heavy-handed attack on the bill and has had some success. Still, Sullivan believes that the bill has a very good chance of passing the House and the Senate.

That dog won't hunt

It ought to be passed. And, as Sullivan says, it is the only energy bill in Congress with a chance of passing.

Of course, critics can claim that Pickens has a dog in the hunt. He would stand to gain by the government and private entities turning to CNG. He's a big stakeholder. Still, there is absolutely nothing wrong with someone making a profit - including the Koch brothers. Pickens' plan, however, turns the tables on our foreign suppliers by putting the United States on the road to energy self-sufficiency.

Simply put, the NAT GAS Act would provide tax credits, based on the weight of a vehicle, of up to \$64,000 per vehicle. Smaller cars would qualify for about \$7,500. The bill also would increase the refueling property tax credit from 30 percent, or \$30,000, to 50 percent, or \$100,000 per station, whichever is less, and for home refueling from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

The main focus is the heavy vehicle fleet in the U.S. That fleet could be more easily converted. Instead of needing a lot of corner refueling stations for cars, companies could build their own stations at hubs and interstate stations could be added to existing truck stops.

Saving oil

The 8 million heavy-duty trucks in the U.S. consume about 2 million barrels of oil a day. That is about 10 percent of the national daily consumption.

Cars would be a slower process, but one well worth pursuing. There are only 112,000 CNG automobiles on the road in the U.S. now. There are far more CNG-fueled cars in other countries.

Sullivan says, and I know that politicians have a tendency to embellish predictions, that this bill could generate 500,000 jobs nationwide. Even if he is off by half that, it's still a lot of good-paying jobs. Many of those jobs would land right here in Oklahoma.

Not to pursue developing CNG for vehicles would be foolish. There are about 2,543 trillion cubic feet

(that's trillion with a "t") of recoverable natural gas in the United States, according to the 2011 energy outlook by the U.S. Energy Information Administration. And there might be even more than that. Oklahoma sits atop vast natural gas deposits and companies in this state have the technology and experience to get it out of the ground.

Are there dangers? Yes. Hydraulic fracturing has long been used to literally shake the gas out of shale formations. And, for the most part, it has been safe. Fracking has come under fire lately. The concerns are real and legitimate. The oil and gas industry needs to assure the public that fracking is safe. That might mean becoming more transparent about what exactly is being pumped into the Earth during fracking.

Fair but vigilant

On the other hand, environmentalists must be willing to be tolerant as well as vigilant.

The ACU and other parties have found their sound bites in this controversy. They claim that the NAT GAS Act is another "government handout" and that the government has no business "picking winners and losers."

Well, as one pundit put it, the government has been picking winners and losers for a long time and it's worked out pretty well so far. Even by not "picking" it is choosing. If the government does nothing, then the one with the most assets is likely to be the winner. That, alone, is influencing the outcome - "picking winners and losers."

The only real losers if CNG is not pursued with government support, are the American people. Sullivan is on the right track and the right side. He deserves support.

I've had my disagreements with Sullivan and likely will have others. But he is always willing to discuss our differences in a civil, honest way. On this, however, we agree.

It's popular for some to say that they worry about the future of our children and grandchildren. Well, this is about the future. Pass the NAT GAS Act.

**Study 'fracking' – Deseret News (Salt Lake City, UT) – 8/13/11**

## Desert News Editorial

T. Boone Pickens is right. The well-known investor says the United States is strengthening its enemies through its addiction to foreign oil, and he is pursuing ways to move the nation toward a reliance on natural gas, instead.

But in the rush to stop enriching regimes in the Middle East and Venezuela, Americans can't afford to unleash a new set of environmental disasters. The United States has succeeded in greatly expanding its home-grown supply of natural gas in recent years through a method known as "fracking." This involves drilling far below the earth's surface and using a blast of chemically treated water to extract reserves previously unobtainable. By some estimates, the nation now has enough natural gas available through this method to supply consumer needs for 100 years, based on current consumption levels. What is not known for sure, however, is whether fracking is safe.

Utah stands to benefit from a consumer shift to natural gas. The Beehive state contains vast supplies of underground reserves. That makes it all the more important for the nation to erase all doubts about new extraction methods through study and research.

Critics say fracking threatens water supplies. Homeowners near some wells claim methane and other chemicals have leaked into water supplies. Others claim more widespread contaminations occurred in Pennsylvania, Texas and Wyoming. In Arkansas, fracking has been blamed for an increase in earthquakes.

A Department of Energy subcommittee has issued recommendations to monitor the safety of fracking. These include measuring levels of methane and other chemicals in nearby wells before the process begins, then continuing to measure as the process proceeds. They call for complete disclosure of all data including the types and amounts of chemicals used in the processes. Companies have balked at such disclosure for competitive reasons, but those concerns quickly would become meaningless if opponents succeeded in banning fracking nationwide.

If the public can be assured that fracking is safe, it could give provide a viable way for the nation to wean itself off oil, while also providing many new jobs for extracting and distributing natural gas.

Pickens also supports federal legislation to provide incentives for trucking firms to convert their fleets to natural gas. Some conservatives have attacked this as another unjust government intrusion into free markets. Such a tax incentive would pick winners and the losers in what ought to be a consumer-driven contest between two types of energy, they say. This would be true if not for how America's oil-rich

enemies are relying on high prices to prop up their regimes. The United States has a compelling national security reason for nudging the market toward natural gas.

It just needs to make sure it does so safely.

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