

## [Promoting Agriculture and Rural Prosperity in America \(Executive Order 13790\)](#)

Establishes the Interagency Task Force on Rural Prosperity and promotes rural energy production.

Updated last **November 8, 2017**  
for the 04/25/2017 Executive Order.



### WHAT IT DOES

---

This [Executive Order](#) establishes the [Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#), a group convened to make policy recommendations in support of the economic revitalization of [rural American communities](#). The Order has six sections, as detailed below.

In section one, the Order explains the purpose of the policy. With particular reference to energy, it states that it is “in the national interest to promote American agriculture and protect the rural communities where food, fiber, forestry, and many of our renewable fuels are cultivated.”

In sections two and three, the Order establishes the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity, sets the [Secretary of Agriculture as its chair](#), and defines its other membership to include:

- [Secretary of the Treasury](#)
- [Secretary of Defense](#)
- [Attorney General](#)
- [Secretary of the Interior](#)
- [Secretary of Commerce](#)
- [Secretary of Labor](#)
- [Secretary of Health and Human Services](#)
- [Secretary of Transportation](#)
- [Secretary of Energy](#)
- [Secretary of Education](#)
- [Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency](#)
- [Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission](#)
- [Director of the Office of Management and Budget](#)
- [Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy](#) (Vacant as of the Issuing of this Order)
- [Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy](#) (Vacant as of the Issuing of this Order)
- [Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers](#)
- [Director of the Domestic Policy Council](#) (Vacant as of the Issuing of this Order)
- [Director of the National Economic Council](#) (Vacant as of the Issuing of this Order)
- [Administrator of the Small Business Administration](#)
- [United States Trade Representative](#)
- [Director of the National Science Foundation](#)
- Heads of such other executive departments, agencies, and offices as the President or the Secretary of Agriculture may, from time to time, designate

In section four, the Order sets the purpose of the task force; subsection (a)(xi), with particular relevance to energy, instructs the Task Force to “further the Nation's energy security by advancing traditional and renewable energy production in the rural landscape.” Subsection (a)(xii) further instructs the Task Force to “address hurdles associated with access to resources on public lands” – a mandate which would include the extraction of fossil fuels as well as the production of renewable energy and harvesting of biomass fuel.

In section six, the Order revokes [Executive Order 13575](#) of June 9, 2011 (Establishment of the White House Rural Council), and the White House Rural Council, which established a council under the Obama Administration to “better coordinate Federal programs and maximize the impact of Federal investment to promote economic prosperity and quality of life in our rural communities.”

Within 180 days of the issuance of this Order (on or before October 22, 2017), the Task Force is responsible for submitting a report to the President describing policy suggestions to meet the aforementioned goals.

## BACKGROUND

---

### Economics

The vast majority of energy extraction and production takes place in rural areas. In many of these places, energy extraction or electricity production is [central to the local economy both as a source of high-paying jobs and/or local tax revenue](#).

The traditional energy sector employs [more than 3.6 million United States workers](#), with approximately 600,000 in renewable energy subfields within this. An [additional 1.9 million workers are employed in energy efficiency](#), and approximately [2 million more workers are employed](#) in construction positions tangential to energy needs.

Currently, renewable energy [accounts for about 15%](#) of total US energy production. That percentage is expected to rise, though, as renewable technology and storage systems improve to allow for more production. Renewable energy is power production from sources that can regenerate, such as from the sun, wind, and water. Currently, the US draws energy from [hydropower](#), [geothermal](#), [wind](#), [solar](#), and [biomass](#) renewable sources.

### Demographics

The current energy workforce is getting older - [the average age of an energy worker is over 50 years old](#), and [45% of workers in the energy utility sector alone are planning to retire by 2024](#). Newer and younger workers must be trained to [avoid a future skills gap](#) in the energy sector that could result in lost productivity.

## RELEVANT SCIENCE

---

### Traditional Energy Production in the United States

Traditional energy production in the U.S. generally refers to production derived from fossil fuels (coal, oil, natural gas and other derivatives). Fossil fuels provide energy through the process of [combustion](#); they are burned to produce electricity, heat or transportation power. These fuels are considered non-renewable, since the timeframe required for them to be replenished through geological processes is significantly longer than the rate at which they are being extracted.

The primary drawbacks to fossil fuel use are the [functionally finite amount of supply](#) and the [emission of greenhouse gasses and other pollutants](#) when these fuels are extracted and/or burned to generate energy. Coal is used predominantly for electricity generation and petroleum predominantly in the transportation sector, while natural gas is used for industrial, residential and electricity generation needs.

### Renewable Energy Production in the United States

Renewable energy production derives fuel from sunlight, wind, water, geothermal heat or biomass products. These fuels are functionally unlimited in their availability, though they are not always present in economically useful quantities at all times in all locations. Renewable energy has been growing rapidly (see chart below) in recent years due to a combination of [falling costs](#) and [policy incentives](#). With the exception of biomass and its derivatives, renewable fuels generate energy without combustion and therefore do not emit harmful pollutants such as CO<sub>2</sub> or [particulate matter](#). Renewable fuels are also, in general, less environmentally harmful when extracted compared to fossil fuels though [land-use alteration](#) is still common when constructing renewable generation facilities.

#### STATUS

---

This order was issued by President Donald J. Trump on April 25, 2017.

#### RELATED POLICIES

---

Thus far in 2017, the following bills related to rural transformation and energy sector employment have been introduced to the 115th Congress:

- [H.R. 338 - To promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce](#)  
Sponsor: Rep. Rush, Bobby L. [D-IL-1] (Introduced 01/05/2017)  
Requires the Secretary of Energy to prioritize training and education in energy and manufacturing fields.
- [H.R. 1837 - 21st Century Energy Workforce Act](#)  
Sponsor: Rep. Norcross, Donald [D-NJ-1] (Introduced 03/30/2017)  
Establishes a program that will give out grants to train individuals in renewable energy jobs; however, these grants will go only to companies, labor, or education organizations.
- [H.R. 2045 - Community College Energy Training Act of 2017](#)  
Sponsor: Rep. Lujan, Ben Ray [D-NM-3] (Introduced 04/06/2017)  
Requires the Secretary of Energy to create a program to provide workforce training in sustainable energy fields at community colleges.
- [S. 895 - Energy Workforce for the 21st Century Act of 2017](#)  
Sponsor: Sen. Heinrich, Martin [D-NM] (Introduced 04/07/2017)  
Requires the Secretary of Energy to establish a program that will improve education for energy and manufacturing related jobs, with the goal of increasing the number of skilled individuals entering the energy workforce.
- [H.R. 2726 - Renewable Jobs Act](#)  
Sponsor: Rep. Ruiz, Raul [D-CA-36] (Introduced 05/25/2017)  
Establishes a pilot program to give grants to States to train individuals in renewable energy jobs. The States receiving the grants will set their trainees up to have lasting and sustainable jobs in an alternative energy source.

#### POLICY HISTORY

---

A related [Executive Order 13575: Establishment of the White House Rural Council](#) (June 9, 2011), which established the White House Rural Council to assess, coordinate, and recommend agricultural policy, was revoked by this Order.

#### PRIMARY AUTHOR

---

Nicole Kastelic, Aubrey Zhang, Sam Pickerill

**EDITOR(S)**

---

Dan Copple, Alexandra Sutton Lawrence, M.Sc.

**ENERGY SUBCATEGORY**

---

[Source](#)

[Production, Conversion, Distribution](#)

**RECOMMENDED CITATION**

---

Duke SciPol, "Promoting Agriculture and Rural Prosperity in America (Executive Order 13790)" available at <http://scipol.duke.edu/content/promoting-agriculture-and-rural-prosperity-america-executive-order-13790> (11/08/2017).

**LICENSE**

---

 This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/). Please distribute widely but give credit to Duke SciPol, linking back to this page if possible.