

## **You've Won Your Energy Trifecta—Now for Some Thoughts on Keeping Your Winnings, Rick Deery**

With a degree of wisdom that is nonexistent in today's political climate, the Founders created our Federal system that, as James Madison put it in Federalist Ten, "breaks and controls the violence of Faction." Madison defined Factions as "a number of citizens amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community. To reduce the impact of "Factions" on all of us, Madison and the Founders gave us a Federal system that divides and disperses power to Federal and state levels and spreads it among many places inside the Federal government. It is a system that is deliberately designed to make things difficult for "Factions" to quickly drive damaging policies into law. For those who only rarely look into the world of Federal congressional activity, it is often a murky place. It fails to quickly respond to the cry, "There ought be a law!" Rejoice in that failure, because in today's world, "Factions" unite around impulses of passion or interest powered by the internet, often adverse to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community - the United States. Proposals to repeal EPA's 2005's "subsidies and tax breaks for Big Oil," fighting global warming induced by the use of fossil fuels and blocking federal oil and gas leasing to make sure the oil companies don't prevent hunting and recreation are just some of the impulses of passion and interest that rock the United States petroleum scene. We'll look at how the impulses of the moment play out in the House of Representatives. More importantly we'll look at how geologists and petroleum geologists in particular, can effectively deal with a body composed of 435 politicians, none of whom are geologists. These politicians are in turn supported by more than 7,000 staffers, most of who have only a minimal interest in science and probably even less interest in geology. This is a tough crowd to approach with the type of technical issues that make up your comfort zone and which in one sense insulate and even isolate geologists from the rest of the citizenry. Other speakers will reach out to you with pleas as to why you as geologists should get engaged in the political arena. I will start with the assumption that you do want to protect yourselves, but are not quite clear on how to proceed and so I'll offer some simple rules for getting engaged. After all if you are not engaged, you will find it hard to keep your winnings.