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By Robert Osborne

July 2016

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I am amazed at the difference between state and federal regulators.

The difference has become more obvious in the last seven years. Under the Obama administration, regulators in the field have taken what appears to be an “I-got-you” approach.

This attitude was highlighted by former Region 6 EPA Administrator Al Armendariz, who publicly stated that his philosophy was to scare everybody under his jurisdiction so they would be afraid to not comply with regulations. Armendariz resigned his position just before being called to testify before Congress. He now works for the Sierra Club.

Within the last few months, we have had further restrictions on oil and gas industry by the Obama administration. EPA adopted new methane emission rule, and proposed new reporting requirements. OSHA has come out with proposals that will increase operators’ liability to accidents on the lease by sub-contractors and protection of workers from silica dust. U.S. Fish and Wildlife wants to expand its area of enforcement as they attempt to redefine “waters of the U.S.”

Meanwhile, back in Texas we have a much different thought process.

Railroad Commissioner Christi Craddick exemplified this thought process a few weeks ago when she instructed RRC staff to look at a dozen or so ideas that could reduce the regulatory burden on the industry while maintaining protection of the environment.

This attitude is not limited to the RRC, but it goes from top to bottom, including Governor Greg Abbott and the leadership of the Texas House and Senate.

We are facing another critical election in November. The Alliance will be involved, and I hope you will, too. Our future depends on it.