



**TOM STROMME/Tribune**

Steve McNally, center, general manager of Hess Corp. in North Dakota announces how the Alliance pipeline will benefit his company's efforts at shipping natural gas and reducing flaring in the oilfields at a press conference in the state capitol on Oct. 29, 2013, in Bismarck. In back are Governor Jack Dalrymple, left, and Terrance Kutryk, CEO of Alliance Pipeline.

more jobs and economic opportunity will surface in all the energy sectors. He said natural gas is an example of how the country can become energy independent and create more positive economic outputs.

“Natural gas prices vary across the planet from \$3 or \$4 to \$17, whereas crude oil is the same,” Dunkelberg said. “Well, the difference is everyone can import and export oil. We can’t do that with our natural gas, we don’t have any way to export it right now.”

Dunkelberg continued saying over the next 10 years the country will develop the infrastructure to export that natural

gas, creating jobs in communities all over North America.

Many energy professionals agree that creating a natural gas free market will not be cheap however. Ken DeCubellis, CEO of Black Ridge Oil and Gas, said the petrochemical industry is forecasted to spend \$30 billion to develop infrastructure to capture natural gas and create a new natural gas logistical system.

“You hear people talking about NGLs, Natural Gas Liquids. That’s things like ethane, propane and butane,” DeCubellis said. “Ethane can be turned into Ethylene, which is a precursor for

polyethylene and other types of plastics and rubbers. And so the petrochemical industry itself is forecast to add about 30 billion dollars of capacity expansion here in the US to get access to that natural gas and convert it into plastics.”

This investment and restructuring of infrastructure within the natural gas industry is something DeCubellis is familiar with.

“I used to work for Exxon Mobil and in the early 2000s into 2006. Exxon embarked on a multi-year program in the Middle East in a country called Qatar,” DeCubellis said. “They wanted to get access to the natural gas in Qatar,

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