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## **U.S. Department of the Interior's Five-Year Plan Dashes Offshore Energy Hopes**

*Administration Proposes Lowest Number of Lease Sales in the History of the Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – House Committee on Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop (UT-01) issued the following statement in response to the Obama Administration's Draft Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2017 to 2022:

*"Someday this Administration will move the goal of energy independence forward. Unfortunately, this is not that day – again. In fact, we've taken a step backward. What they have proposed, is the lowest number of lease sales in the history of the OCS program.*

*"The Obama Administration has dashed America's offshore energy hopes once again by locking up vast swaths of taxpayer-owned resources for exploration. Instead of exploring America's energy potential, the Administration would rather leave these assets untapped, cutting off investment and limiting possibilities for job creation.*

*"On the heels of the Administration's decision to lock up millions of acres from responsible energy development in the Arctic, this plan – despite a limited offering of one potential lease sale in the Atlantic – falls far short of our nation's energy needs if we want to continue on a path toward independence."*

Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals Chairman Doug Lamborn (CO-5) responded as well:

*"Although the President paid lip service to our nation's bright energy future in his State of the Union address, his Administration continues to exacerbate the huge difference between booming production on state and private lands and sluggish production on federal land and waters. Without a doubt, this plan signals that the President will continue the federal government's failed energy policies for the remainder of his tenure in office."*

U.S. Representative Don Young (AK-at large) commented:

*"With today's announcement, the Obama Administration's assault on Alaska moves from blocking development opportunities on our lands to those off our shores. In defiance of Alaska's statewide elected officials and our legislature, the President has once again thumbed his nose at the Alaskan people as he opens another front in his ongoing war against our state. It's becoming undeniably clear that this Administration does not view Alaska as a sovereign state, but rather an eco-theme park for the most extreme environmentalist allies of the President and his party."*

U.S. Representative Jeff Duncan (SC-03) commented:

*"This is an important step towards making offshore production a reality. The inclusion of the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf in the Draft Proposed Plan could mean billions of dollars in economic activity and revenue for South Carolina. It's critical that both the permitting process for seismic testing to collect new data and the next Five-Year Program move forward simultaneously, and I'm thankful that the Interior Department has done that so far. North America is poised to become the world's leading source of energy production, and by producing energy in the Atlantic we can strengthen America's energy security and lessen our dependence on Middle Eastern sources of oil. Prosperity shouldn't be a partisan issue, and I hope that the Obama Administration will continue to heed the wishes of the citizens of South Carolina and fully open up these areas for energy production and exploration."*

U.S. Representative Bradley Byrne (AL-01) commented:

*"As the Congressman representing Alabama's coast, I have continually urged the Department of Interior to put forward an ambitious Five-Year Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program that takes advantage of our nation's immense natural resources. While I am pleased the plan includes new areas of exploration off the Atlantic coast, I continue to believe more areas could be opened up for exploration. I look forward to further examining the details of the plan and providing persistent oversight with my colleagues on the House Natural Resources Committee."*

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