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Wednesday, March 30, 2011
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Chairman Hastings on DOI Report: Invented Definition Allows the Administration to Mischaracterize Two-Thirds of the Gulf as Inactive

WASHINGTON, D.C. –At today’s Full Committee hearing with Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) Director Michael Bromwich, Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) delivered the following remarks on the Department of the Interior’s report produced yesterday, at the request of the President, on the status of U.S. energy leases. In the report, DOI [invents new definitions](#) in order to generate headlines that two-thirds of offshore leases are “inactive.”

“I am compelled to comment on the report issued yesterday by the Department of the Interior regarding active and inactive leases. This report was prepared at the direction of the President at his press conference two weeks ago to defend his Administration’s policies in the face of rising gas prices.

“To be blunt, this report flat-out invents the inactive definition used to label two-thirds of Gulf leases as inactive. This definition of inactive doesn’t exist in law or regulation. It contradicts information posted March 1st on the Interior Department’s own website. In fact, the report’s definition for inactive offshore leases directly contradicts the definition used for onshore leases.

“This invented definition allows the Administration to mischaracterize two-thirds of the Gulf as inactive.

“It also bears stating that under this invented definition, for the past 10 months, the Administration has single-handedly prevented any lease-holder to become active due to its refusal to issue new exploration or development plans.

“It appears this invented definition was used to generate headlines.”

[Click here](#) to read Chairman Hastings full opening statement at today’s oversight hearing on the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement proposed FY 2012 budget.

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