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Chairman Hastings Asks House Appropriators to Halt Funding and Hit “Pause” on President’s Ocean Zoning Policy

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) sent a [letter](#) yesterday to Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (KY-05) asking that each appropriations bill include language to prohibit the use of funds for the implementation of President Obama’s ocean zoning and National Ocean Policy.

“The Natural Resources Committee has undertaken oversight over this far-reaching Policy and the lack of information provided by the Administration raises serious concerns – particularly about the funding for the implementation of the Policy and the negative impact on existing activities by agencies implementing the Policy. The President’s Policy is especially alarming due to the fact it will not only affect the oceans and coastal areas, but also stretches far inland following rivers and their tributaries upstream for hundreds of miles,” writes Hastings in the letter. “The Administration’s efforts to impose this Policy across the nation and mandate ocean zoning should be put on pause until the full economic consequences are known and direct answers are given on the specific statutory authority that justifies the construction of this new, regulatory behemoth. This can best be accomplished by putting a halt to the Administration’s cloaked funding of this Policy for FY 2013. I respectfully request that the Appropriations Committee include language in each Fiscal Year 2013 appropriation bill prohibiting the use of funds to implement this National Ocean Policy.”

Chairman Hastings’ letter also addresses the Administration’s failure to comply with the Committee’s requests for information about implementation of the Policy. Chairman Hastings has sent two letters to the Administration requesting information on the scope of federal agency involvement in the development and implementation of the National Ocean Policy, as well as the amount of money being spent on its implementation. The first [letter](#) was sent on February 23, 2012 and the [second](#) on March 20, 2012. The Committee has yet to receive a complete response to all of its questions and requests for documents.

Testifying in front of the Full Committee on March 7, 2012, CEQ Chairwoman Nancy Sutley was again unable to answer questions on how much money is currently being spent on this far-reaching new Policy.

The Administration’s draft National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan includes a list of required actions, outcomes and milestones to be achieved by a number of federal agencies in 2012 and 2013. However, no federal agency has requested any funding for the implementation of these actions which means funds are being diverted for unauthorized activities within the federal agencies’ budgets.

Click [here](#) to read a full copy of the letter.

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