



To: House Committee on Natural Resources Republican Members  
From: Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals Staff; Ashley Nichols ([Ashley.Nichols@mail.house.gov](mailto:Ashley.Nichols@mail.house.gov)), Rebecca Konolige ([Rebecca.Konolige@mail.house.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Konolige@mail.house.gov)), Rob MacGregor ([Robert.MacGregor@mail.house.gov](mailto:Robert.MacGregor@mail.house.gov))  
Date: June 20, 2022  
Subject: Republican Oversight Forum titled, “*Skyrocketing Energy Costs Are Hurting Americans*”

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Committee on Natural Resources Republicans and the Committee on Energy and Commerce Republicans will hold a forum to examine the Biden administration’s disastrous energy policies and their impact at on American families and businesses. The forum will be held **on Friday, June 24, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. (EDT)** in Room 217 of the Capitol Visitors Center (CVC) and via Zoom.

Member offices are requested to notify Will Layden ([Will.Layden@mail.house.gov](mailto:Will.Layden@mail.house.gov)) and Baylee Seeman ([Baylee.Seeman@mail.house.gov](mailto:Baylee.Seeman@mail.house.gov)) **no later than Wednesday, June 22, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. (EDT)** if they intend to participate in-person from CVC-217 or virtually from another location. To continue hearing from local stakeholders and rural Americans who lack the resources to travel to Washington, D.C., witnesses will appear via Zoom.

Please contact Bailey Mailloux ([Bailey.Mailloux@mail.house.gov](mailto:Bailey.Mailloux@mail.house.gov)) should any technical difficulties arise.

## I. KEY MESSAGES

- Gas prices are the highest ever recorded in the United States, hitting the \$5.00 per gallon benchmark for the first time on June 11, 2022.<sup>1</sup> This is having enormous effects on the lives of everyday Americans, increasing household utility bills, transportation costs for families and businesses, and consumer good prices.
- Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and the subsequent banning of Russian crude oil by the United States and other major world economies, intensified an existing global energy shortage. While the Russian invasion of Ukraine may have contributed to current conditions, it is not the root cause.
- Gas prices have been steadily rising since President Biden took office in January 2021. Democrats’ policies have only made the energy crisis worse. To date, not a single new oil or gas lease has been issued for oil and gas production on federal lands or in federal waters.

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<sup>1</sup> Patti Domm, “Gasoline prices top \$5 a gallon nationally for the first time and are likely headed higher,” CNBC, updated June 13, 2022, <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/06/11/gasoline-prices-top-5-a-gallon-nationally-for-the-first-time-and-are-likely-headed-higher.html>.



- The energy shortage is predicted to worsen this summer. In addition to rising retail gas and diesel prices, widespread blackouts are projected across large swaths of the country. The Midwestern grid, for example, lacks the energy resources to power 3.7 million homes.<sup>2</sup>
- Instead of continuing to put the lives and livelihoods of Americans at risk, Congress should act on legislative proposals put forth by Congressional Republicans to increase domestic production, lower prices, and alleviate the worsening energy crisis.

## II. WITNESSES

- **Tim Soignet**, Sherriff of Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana (*Graves*)
- **Jim Weakley**, President, Lake Carriers Association (*Stauber*)
- **Other Witnesses TBD**

Members are encouraged to invite one witness to testify about how the Biden Bans have impacted them, their families, and their communities. Please notify the Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee staff if you intend to invite a witness and provide their contact information so staff can furnish a virtual meeting link and coordinate technology in advance.

## III. BACKGROUND

### *Impact of Rising Energy Prices*

Gas prices in the United States are the highest ever recorded.<sup>3</sup> An alarming benchmark was reached on June 11, 2022, when the national average price of a gallon of gasoline hit \$5.00 for the first time.<sup>4</sup> Prices have since exceeded<sup>5</sup> this mark, breaking records across the country. Gas in California, for example, costs an average of \$6.38 per gallon as of June 21, 2022.<sup>6</sup> These prices are significantly higher than the average costs per gallon one year ago by at least \$2.00.<sup>7</sup> The nationwide average price for a gallon of gasoline has nearly doubled since President Biden took office. On the day President Trump left office in January 2020, a gallon of regular grade gasoline averaged \$2.55.<sup>8</sup>

Rapidly climbing gas prices are having immense, tangible effects on Americans throughout the nation. Unfortunately, without major shifts in domestic energy policy, the public is unlikely to see relief anytime soon. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index (CPI), energy costs have increased 34.6 percent over the past year.<sup>9</sup> The average consumer is expected spend around \$450 a month on fuel this summer.<sup>10</sup> Many Americans already have unpaid utility bills due to

<sup>2</sup> Evan Halper, "A summer of blackouts? Wheezing power grid leaves states at risk," Washington Post, June 2, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/06/02/blackout-states-summer-heat/>.

<sup>3</sup> AAA, "NATIONAL AVERAGE HITS NEW ALL-TIME HIGH AT \$5 PER GALLON," June 13, 2022, <https://gasprices.aaa.com/national-average-hits-new-all-time-high-at-5-per-gallon/>.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> AAA, National Average Gas Prices, June 21, 2022, <https://gasprices.aaa.com/>.

<sup>6</sup> AAA, State Gas Price Averages, June 14, 2022, <https://gasprices.aaa.com/state-gas-price-averages/>.

<sup>7</sup> AAA, National Average Gas Prices, June 14, 2022, <https://gasprices.aaa.com/>.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Regular All Formulations Retail Gasoline Prices (Dollars per Gallon), 1992-2022, [https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/LeafHandler.ashx?n=PET&s=EMM\\_EPMM\\_PTE\\_NUS\\_DPG&f=M](https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/LeafHandler.ashx?n=PET&s=EMM_EPMM_PTE_NUS_DPG&f=M).

<sup>9</sup> Brett Holzhauser, "Americans owe \$22 billion in late utility bills as energy prices spike 34%—here's where you can find help," CNBC, June 10, 2022, <https://www.cnbc.com/select/where-to-find-help-with-late-utility-bills/>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/11/business/energy-environment/gasoline-price.html>

unaffordable energy costs, with the average family currently holding about \$1,000 in utility debt.<sup>11</sup> Total utility debt in the United States is approximately \$22 billion.<sup>12</sup>

Diesel prices have been similarly affected by the energy crisis, hitting national records of \$5.82 a gallon on June 19, 2022.<sup>13</sup> This has vast implications for virtually every economic sector that relies on transportation or heavy machinery, including trucking, logging, construction, agriculture, retail, and many others. To stay competitive, many businesses will be forced to pass increased transportation costs along to the consumer, putting upward pressure on the price of everyday consumer goods, including food.<sup>14</sup> In fact, last month consumer prices experienced a year-over-year increase of 8.6 percent compared to 2021, a new 40-year record. Astonishingly, 2.4 percentage points of that increase was attributed to climbing energy costs.<sup>15</sup> Higher diesel prices are becoming a significant factor in higher consumer food costs since diesel engines power about 75 percent of all farm equipment, transport 90 percent of farm products, and pump about 20 percent of agriculture's irrigation water in the United States.<sup>16</sup> These higher costs, coupled with supply chain issues, higher fertilizer costs, loss of food production in Ukraine and record drought in the western United States have contributed to higher food prices nationwide. As a result of these factors, the prices of meats, poultry, fish and eggs have increased 14 percent, dairy, cereals and bakery products have increased 12 percent, and fruit and vegetables have increased 8 percent since June 2021.<sup>17</sup>

Additionally, high diesel prices have had a significant impact on the forestry industry, including loggers, many of whom are small, family-owned businesses, and companies trying to actively manage our federal lands. Family logging businesses that have operated for decades are now shutting their doors, stating, “[w]hen you got a fleet of trucks, and you're running probably 7[00] to 800 miles a day, a truck is going to get five miles to the gallon. That fuel increase kills you. And so I didn't see any way out.”<sup>18</sup> Other logging companies are estimating they will spend \$1.7 million more than anticipated this year on diesel alone as fuel prices increase.<sup>19</sup> Particularly in the West, these strains on forest management infrastructure will make it even more difficult to treat our fire-prone lands and prevent catastrophic wildfires.

### *Threat of Rolling Blackouts*

Grid experts are warning that this summer could be the summer equivalent of Winter Storm Uri, which led to rolling blackouts in Texas in Winter of 2021 and killed an estimated 254 people.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Brett Holzhauser, “Americans owe \$22 billion in late utility bills as energy prices spike 34%—here’s where you can find help,” CNBC, June 10, 2022, <https://www.cnbc.com/select/where-to-find-help-with-late-utility-bills/>.

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> AAA, National Average Gas Prices, June 21, 2022, <https://gasprices.aaa.com/>.

<sup>14</sup> Ronald White, “Why you should care about diesel’s soaring price: It’s making everything cost more,” LA Times, May 26, 2022, <https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2022-05-26/high-gas-and-diesel-prices-fuel-inflation-hurting-consumers>.

<sup>15</sup> “U.S. inflation hit a new 40-year high last month of 8.6 percent,” Politico, June 10, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/06/10/inflation-new-high-may-00038786>.

<sup>16</sup> Diesel Technology Forum. ABOUT CLEAN DIESEL AGRICULTURE. <https://www.dieselforum.org/about-clean-diesel/agriculture>.

<sup>17</sup> Keith Good, “Food, Gas Prices Soar, While Fertilizer Prices Show Signs of Moderating,” Farm Policy News, June 12, 2022,

<https://farmpolicynews.illinois.edu/2022/06/food-gas-prices-soar-while-fertilizer-prices-show-signs-of-moderating/>.

<sup>18</sup> Nelson and Humes, “Family logging business forced to close after nearly 40 years due to inflation, gas prices,” May 15, 2022, ABC 15 News,

<https://wpde.com/news/local/family-logging-business-forced-to-close-after-nearly-40-years-due-to-inflation-gas-prices>.

<sup>19</sup> Bellwether Forest Products, “Reflections on the current state of fuel prices in logging and transport,” <https://bellwetherfp.com/reflections-on-the-current-state-of-fuel-prices-in-logging-and-transport/>.

<sup>20</sup> Catherine Morehouse, “Spiking Temperatures Could Cause More Blackouts This Summer. They Won’t Be the Last,” Politico, May 31, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/31/spiking-temperatures-could-cause-more-blackouts-this-summer-they-wont-be-the-last-00034858>.

In total, an estimated 100 million Americans are at an increased risk of blackouts this summer.<sup>21</sup> The region at greatest risk is the Upper Midwest and states in the mid-South along the Mississippi River, including Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, and Indiana. Texas. The West, and the Southwest are also at an elevated risk of blackouts.<sup>22</sup>

According to the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, the primary reason behind the risk of blackouts is the early retirement of coal and natural gas fired plants outpacing renewable energy development.<sup>23</sup> By 2024, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) will see the closure of coal and gas-fired plants that produce 13 gigawatts of power, while only 8 gigawatts of replacement sources are currently under development in the region.<sup>24</sup> This summer, MISO will have 3.2 gigawatts less power capacity than last summer, lacking the energy to power 3.7 million homes in the region.<sup>25</sup> Predicted record temperatures for the summer only exacerbate this issue. Peak demands for MISO could increase by 1.7 percent this summer, but MISO will have 2.3 percent less generation capacity than last year.<sup>26</sup>



Figure 1: Summer Reliability Risk Area Summary

| Seasonal Risk Assessment Summary |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| High                             | Potential for insufficient operating reserves in normal peak conditions  |
| Elevated                         | Potential for insufficient operating reserves in above-normal conditions |
| Low                              | Sufficient operating reserves expected                                   |

Source: NERC Summer 2022 Reliability Assessment.

Due to these plant closures and scarcity of fuel, the remaining plants are under stress. Natural gas-fired plants, for instance, are struggling due to increasing gas prices.<sup>27</sup> Last month, Texas saw record-breaking heat. The resultant spike in demand, led to six power plants going offline at once and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas asking Texans to turn their thermostats up to 78-degrees or above.<sup>28</sup> The

<sup>21</sup> Adam Manno, “100m living in Midwest, West Coast and Southwest face summer power outages from hot weather, climate change, overstretched fossil fuel power plants and unreliable green alternatives, energy regulator warns,” Daily Mail, May 19, 2022, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10834143/Millions-Americans-risk-blackouts-summer-heat-drought-strain-power-grid.html>.

<sup>22</sup> Andrew Blok, “These States are Most Likely to Get Blackouts This Summer. Here’s How to Prepare,” CNET, June 2, 2022, <https://www.cnet.com/home/energy-and-utilities/more-blackouts-are-coming-this-summer-heres-how-to-prepare/E.O. 13990>.

<sup>23</sup> NERC Summer 2022 Reliability Assessment

<sup>24</sup> Vanessa Bates Ramirez, “Summer Could Bring Rolling Blackouts as Power Grids Get More Unstable,” SingularityHub, June 8, 2022, <https://singularityhub.com/2022/06/08/as-power-grids-get-more-unstable-should-we-slow-the-renewables-roll/>.

<sup>25</sup> NERC Summer 2022 Reliability Assessment.

<sup>26</sup> Vanessa Bates Ramirez, “Summer Could Bring Rolling Blackouts as Power Grids Get More Unstable,” SingularityHub, June 8, 2022, <https://singularityhub.com/2022/06/08/as-power-grids-get-more-unstable-should-we-slow-the-renewables-roll/>.

<sup>27</sup> Catherine Morehouse, “Spiking Temperatures Could Cause More Blackouts This Summer. They Won’t Be the Last,” Politico, May 31, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/31/spiking-temperatures-could-cause-more-blackouts-this-summer-they-wont-be-the-last-00034858>.

<sup>28</sup> Mitchell Ferman, “Texas’ grid operator told a power plant to delay repairs ahead of a May heat wave. It was among six that crashed,” Texas Tribune, May 17, 2022, <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/05/17/texas-power-plant-failure-repairs-ercot/>.

stress of extreme weather this summer on an already overburdened grid could lead to MISO, California, and Northwest regions losing more than 9 gigawatts of power each.<sup>29</sup>

### *The Biden Administration's Anti-Energy Policies*

**Refusal to Issue New Oil and Gas Leases:** Beginning on his first day in office, President Biden cancelled the Keystone XL pipeline,<sup>30</sup> shut down the Congressionally-authorized oil and gas program in the 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska,<sup>31</sup> and put a moratorium on oil and gas leasing on federal lands and waters.<sup>32</sup> His administration has delayed or blocked the issuance of permits necessary for American energy development, initiated mineral withdrawals in resource rich areas, added layers of unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape to permitting decisions, and threatened energy producers with increased regulation and royalty rates.

The Biden administration has still not issued *any* new onshore or offshore leases to date. If Biden's administration had issued new leases in 2021, new production could be happening today. The unlawful moratorium on new leasing was ended by an injunction in June 2022,<sup>33</sup> but the administration found ways to avoid issuing leases despite the court ruling. For instance, the Department of the Interior (DOI) held one offshore lease sale in November 2021<sup>34</sup> but a district court vacated the lease sale in January 2022 in an unprecedented decision.<sup>35</sup> The Biden administration chose not to appeal this case, declining to defend their own work.<sup>36</sup> As a result, no new leases were issued for this sale. Onshore, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has scheduled some lease sales but is offering minimal acreage for lease and raised the royalty rate on new leases from 12.5 percent to 18.75 percent, which will increase the cost of production<sup>37</sup>. The oil and gas industry has nominated thousands of parcels which have not been offered by BLM for sale.<sup>38</sup> Further, restricting acreage available for lease will halt development planned on leased acreage for which adjacent acreage is needed, as well as future production.

The Biden administration recently cancelled the three remaining sales under the current 5-year plan for offshore leasing.<sup>39</sup> After ignoring repeated Congressional requests for information,<sup>40</sup> Secretary Haaland testified before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources that the Department would publish a draft version of the 2022 to 2027 5-year plan, known as a "proposed program," by June 30, 2022, when the current plan expires.<sup>41</sup> Publication of a proposed program is the second step in a lengthy interagency process, and many months of public comment and agency deliberation must occur before

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<sup>29</sup> Catherine Morehouse, "Spiking Temperatures Could Cause More Blackouts This Summer. They Won't Be the Last," Politico, May 31, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/31/spiking-temperatures-could-cause-more-blackouts-this-summer-they-wont-be-the-last-00034858>.

<sup>30</sup> Executive Order (E.O.) 13990.

<sup>31</sup> Executive Order (E.O.) 13990.

<sup>32</sup> Executive Order (E.O.) 14008.

<sup>33</sup> Joshua Partlow and Juliet Eilperin, "Louisiana judge blocks Biden administration's oil and gas leasing pause," Washington Post, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2021/06/15/louisiana-judge-blocks-biden-administrations-oil-gas-leasing-pause/>.

<sup>34</sup> Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Final Notice of Sale, Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Lease Sale 257, <https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/oil-gas-energy/leasing/Final-NOS-257.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Friends of the Earth, *et al.* vs. Debra Haaland, *et al.*, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, Memorandum Opinion, filed January 27, 2022, <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/eenews/f/eenews/?id=0000017e-a065-db8b-ab7f-f2ff5ec00000>.

<sup>36</sup> Rachel Frazin, "Biden administration won't appeal invalidation of offshore oil leases," The Hill, March 1, 2022, <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/596334-biden-administration-declines-to-appeal-invalidation-of-offshore>.

<sup>37</sup> Department of the Interior. Interior Department Announces Significantly Reformed Onshore Oil and Gas Lease Sales. April 15, 2022. <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-department-announces-significantly-reformed-onshore-oil-and-gas-lease-sales>.

<sup>38</sup> Department of the Interior. Bureau of Land Management. Oil and Gas Statistics. Table 13. Expressions of Interest.

<sup>39</sup> Department of the Interior. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. 2017-2022 Lease Sale Schedule. <https://www.boem.gov/2017-2022-lease-sale-schedule>

<sup>40</sup> Letter to Secretary Haaland and Director Lefton. March 9, 2022. [https://republicans-naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/22-03-09\\_westerman\\_rogers\\_newhouse\\_to\\_haaland\\_doi\\_lefton\\_boem\\_re\\_offshore\\_leasing\\_program.pdf](https://republicans-naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/22-03-09_westerman_rogers_newhouse_to_haaland_doi_lefton_boem_re_offshore_leasing_program.pdf).

<sup>41</sup> Testimony of Secretary Deb Haaland. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Hearing. May 19, 2022.

the final program is published. President Biden's first year in office is the first year since 1965 in which the DOI did not hold an offshore lease sale.<sup>42</sup> The Biden administration's cancellation of offshore sales and delay in releasing a new 5-year plan may result in no offshore sales for two full years.

Conducting regular lease sales signals that federal lands are open for business. It is impossible to generate private-sector confidence – and investment – in American energy production today when future production is blocked by the Biden administration.

Multiple Permits, Leases, and Other Authorizations are Necessary for Production: While at times the Biden administration has attempted to blame unused permits for rising energy costs, their accusations ignore the complex realities of energy production. The decision by a producer to use drill permits, known as Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs), at any given time is a complex calculation based on the availability of permits, acreage, and equipment, among other business considerations. Drilling operations cannot commence with only a single permit in hand – in fact, operators must apply and wait for a variety of permits, authorizations, and rights-of-way to commence exploration and production. There is an interlocking relationship between permitting and leasing, as operators need to be confident that they can access all the acreage they need before they start active production. This is why the lack of new leasing and backlog of more than 4,400 APDs pending approval (as of April 2022)<sup>43</sup> under President Biden has been so harmful to domestic energy production.

Reasons that an approved APD may not be currently used for production may include:

- Additional permits are required to begin operations;
- The federal government has failed to approve necessary rights-of-way needed for roads and infrastructure;
- Parcels needed to develop a field have not yet been offered in a lease sale;
- Parcels turn out not to be productive at commercial levels after exploratory drilling;
- Seasonal stipulations may be in place for species mitigation;
- There may be difficulty securing financing due to the administration's hostile regulatory agenda; and
- Equipment availability has been affected by President Biden's supply chain crisis.

Additionally, the Departments of the Interior (DOI) and Commerce have failed to issue new seismic permits for offshore oil and gas exploration and production. Seismic permits needed to bring oil and gas production online from existing leases are being severely restricted and delayed while the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) claims it needs at least 18 months to rewrite its regulations.<sup>44</sup>

Prior to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) authorizing a seismic survey, BOEM requires the operator to obtain a Letter of Authorization ("LOA," which is essentially a permit) from NMFS.<sup>45</sup> The LOA sets a limit on marine mammal interaction the operator is permitted to cause under the *Marine Mammal Protection Act* (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.) during the operator's activity.

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<sup>42</sup> Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Offshore Data Center. Gulf of Mexico Oil and Gas Lease Offerings.

<sup>43</sup> Bureau of Land Management. Application for Permit to Drill Status Report: 4/1/2022 to 4/30/2022. <https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/docs/2022-05/FY%202022%20APD%20Status%20Report%20Apr.pdf>.

<sup>44</sup> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Update regarding planned GOM rule revision. February 2022. [https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-02/GOM\\_RevisedRuleStatement\\_OPR1\\_0.pdf](https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-02/GOM_RevisedRuleStatement_OPR1_0.pdf).

<sup>45</sup> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Incidental Take Authorizations Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act>.

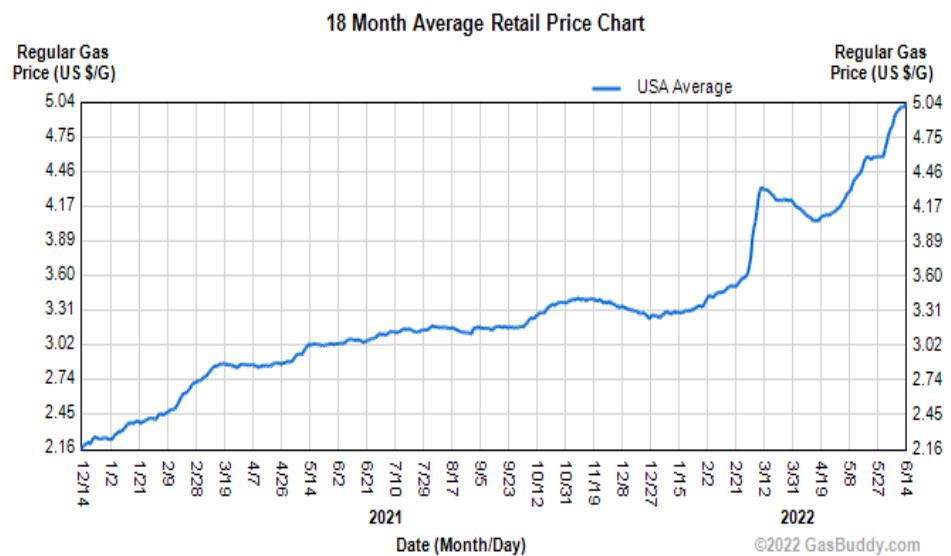


NMFS spent over a decade creating its current Incidental Take Regulations (ITRs), under which LOAs are granted, and just finalized them in 2021. However, NMFS is no longer issuing LOAs because the total annual amount of killer whale takes allowed under the current ITRs has already been used up until April 2023, based on a mathematical error BOEM made that underpinned NMFS’s regulations.<sup>46</sup>

NMFS currently has 15 LOA applications pending and cannot guarantee issuance of any of them before April 2023.<sup>47</sup> Some of these permits have been awaiting action for more than 100 days, when they should take only 2 to 4 weeks to issue.<sup>48</sup> If approved, these permits will lead to new production as early as next year.<sup>49</sup>

*The Democrats’ Inaction amidst Soaring Energy Prices*

Instead of holding regular lease sales to increase domestic supply, Democrats are blaming<sup>50</sup> energy producers, as well as Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, for the high prices. While part of the recent spikes in gas prices can be attributed to the lack of Russian oil on the market, this is only a part of the problem: energy costs have been rising since Democrats took control of our government and are now rising on a nearly daily basis.



Source: GasBuddy.com

Unfortunately, Democrats seems unwilling to analyze their own energy policies and admit that a refusal to issues leases and their blatantly anti- fossil fuel rhetoric<sup>51</sup> is harmful to production. The Biden administration is doubling down on its nonsensical counternarrative, sending a letter<sup>52</sup> to oil companies on June 14, 2022, demanding they increase their refining capacity. The same week, Secretary of Energy, Jennifer Granholm, gave mixed messages to the energy sector, asking companies to produce more oil and gas today, but then said they want to reduce production in 5 years to facilitate the Biden administration’s climate agenda.<sup>53</sup> If

<sup>46</sup> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Update regarding planned GOM rule revision. February 2022. [https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-02/GOM\\_RevisedRuleStatement\\_OPR1\\_0.pdf](https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-02/GOM_RevisedRuleStatement_OPR1_0.pdf).

<sup>47</sup> Industry briefings to Energy and Mineral Resources Minority Subcommittee Staff. June 2022.

<sup>48</sup> Industry briefings to Energy and Mineral Resources Minority Subcommittee Staff. June 2022.

<sup>49</sup> Industry briefings to Energy and Mineral Resources Minority Subcommittee Staff. June 2022.

<sup>50</sup> George Cahlink and Jeremy Dillon, “Dems have a new target in gas price blame game: Refiners,” Politico, June 16, 2022, <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2022/06/16/dems-have-a-new-target-in-gas-price-blame-game-refiners-00040019>.

<sup>51</sup> Thomas Phippen, “Biden keeping his promise to ‘end fossil fuel’ increased gas prices, RSC memo shows,” Fox Business, March 28, 2022, <https://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/biden-fossil-fuel-gas-prices-promise-republican-study-committee-memo>.

<sup>52</sup> Letter dated June 14, 2022 to Mr. Darren Woods, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Exxon Mobil Corporation, from President Joseph Biden, <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/eenews/f/eenews/?id=00000181-6933-dbd9-a1d9-edff4c620000>.

<sup>53</sup> CNN. John Berman interview of Secretary Jennifer Granholm. June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Democrats truly want to reduce prices for the American consumer, as they claim,<sup>54</sup> then DOI should take immediate action to resume regular onshore and offshore oil and gas lease sales to increase supply and calm the market and address permitting and regulatory barriers to production and refining.

### *Republican Oversight of the Biden Administration*

Congressional Republicans are holding the Biden administration accountable for its anti-American energy agenda.

On March 9<sup>th</sup>, Congressional Republicans wrote to DOI Secretary Haaland to warn of the impact of the Biden administration's refusal to hold oil and gas lease sales. On May 31<sup>st</sup>, Congressional Republicans wrote to Commerce Secretary Raimondo to hold the Biden administration accountable for the delay in issuance of key seismic permits necessary to bring new oil and gas production online in the Gulf of Mexico. The Biden administration has continued to ignore Congressional requests for information regarding continued delays of oil and gas leasing and permitting activities.

On June 15<sup>th</sup>, Energy and Commerce Republicans led a letter to President Biden to call for the reversal of the decision to waive tariffs and undermine an ongoing investigation by the U.S. Department of Commerce to determine whether China is violating American trade laws and harming domestic solar panel manufacturers. On June 7<sup>th</sup>, Energy and Commerce Republicans wrote DOE Secretary Granholm and FERC Chairman Glick to understand what specific actions are being taken to address potential energy or electricity emergencies this summer. The letter also addresses how proposed and final EPA rule makings may be affecting the reliable delivery of electricity.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Energy and Commerce Republicans wrote DOE Secretary Granholm to provide information on DOE's management of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and how China is taking advantage of the Biden Administration's use of our strategic fuel reserves. The reserves, which are to be used in emergencies such as wars or natural disasters, have been depleted by the Biden administration, while allowing OPEC, Russia, and China to gain geopolitical leverage over the United States.

Congressional Republicans will continue to hold the Biden administration accountable for their refusal to follow the law and resume regular leasing.

### *Republican Solutions to Increase U.S. Production in the Immediate Future:*

Congressional Republicans have introduced several legislative proposals to increase production of domestic oil and gas, which are greatly needed at this time of crisis. These include:

- [H.R. 6858 \(McMorris Rodgers-Westerman\)](#), *American Energy Independence from Russia Act*
- [H.R.4334 \(Scalise\)](#), *American Energy First Act*
- [H.R.2515 \(Graves\)](#), *Building United States Infrastructure through Limited Delays and Efficient Reviews (BUILDER) Act of 2021*
- [H.R.7304 \(Rosendale\)](#), *Restore Onshore Energy Production Act*
- [H.R.7306 \(Van Duyne\)](#), *Strategy to Secure Offshore Energy Act*

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<sup>54</sup> *Id.*



- [H.R. 7293 \(Herrell\)](#), *Energy Permitting Certainty Act*
- [H.R. 7292 \(Graves\)](#), *Securing American Energy & Investing in Resiliency Act*
- [H.R. 7298 \(Moore\)](#), *Promoting Energy Independence and Transparency Act*
- [H.R.7285 \(Carl\)](#), *Unleashing American Energy Act*
- [H.R. 1600 \(Upton\)](#), *Methane Emissions Reduction Act*
- [H.R. 1761 \(McKinley\)](#), *CCUS Innovation Act*
- [H.R. 575 \(Mullin\)](#), *Promoting Cross-Border Energy Infrastructure Act*
- [H.R. 684 \(Armstrong\)](#), *Keystone XL Pipeline Construction and Jobs Preservation Act*
- [H.R. 751 \(Duncan\)](#), *Protecting American Energy Production Act*
- [H.R. 1575 \(Johnson\)](#), *Unlocking our Domestic LNG Potential Act*
- [H.R. 1616 \(Burgess\)](#), *Promoting Interagency Coordination for Review of Natural Gas Pipelines Act*
- [H.R. 6235 \(McMorris Rodgers\)](#), *Strategic Production Response Act*