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President's Ocean Policy Task Force Prepares to Release Final Recommendations

*Will Administration Propose Blocking Offshore Oil, Natural Gas and
Renewable Energy Production?*

The Obama Administration's Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force is scheduled to soon release its final recommendations on national policy for the management of our oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes.

These recommendations could significantly alter the economic and recreational use of our oceans and have a broad impact on activities ranging from fishing to offshore energy development.

In October, House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04), Congressman Bill Cassidy (LA-06) and 67 other bipartisan Members of Congress sent a [letter](#) expressing concerns that the President's Ocean Policy Task Force's [Interim Report](#) was not balanced and could be used to block offshore energy development and job creation. In the letter, lawmakers stressed the importance of maintaining the multiple uses of our oceans:

"The policies and principles that are advocated in the Interim Report focus heavily on environmental stewardship, which is one of several important priorities. However, the Interim Report does not adequately support other national priorities, including the economic development of ocean resources and the recreational use of our waters.

We are particularly concerned about the Task Force's impact on our nation's ability to safely develop its own offshore energy, including oil, natural gas and renewable energy. It is critical that the Task Force's proposals do not inhibit energy activity offshore in domestic waters and undermine the Department of the Interior's Five Year Leasing Program for offshore energy development. An ocean management policy that puts new restrictions on energy development would not only raise prices for consumers, but would negatively impact Americans working in the offshore energy industry and all Americans whose livelihood depends on access to affordable energy."

With unemployment at 10 percent, Americans cannot afford more policies from the Obama Administration that will further delay economic growth and discourage job creation.

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