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House Votes to Halt Funding for Obama Admin's Mandatory Ocean Zoning

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) and Representative Bill Flores (TX-17) released the following statements after the House passed in a bipartisan vote of 246 to 174 an amendment offered by Rep. Flores to the FY 2013 Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill to halt funding for the implementation of Executive Order 13547, President Obama's ocean zoning and National Ocean Policy.

"The National Ocean Policy creates a new layer of federal bureaucracy that has the potential to make major changes to the way inland, ocean and coastal activities are managed. Mandatory ocean zoning has already proven to be an excuse for the Administration to block economic activity. Without knowing the potential jobs and economic ramifications of the Policy, nor the amount of time, money and resources it will cost to implement, it is imperative that we halt funding so that these questions can be answered and proper Congressional oversight can be conducted," **said Chairman Hastings.**

"The National Ocean Policy was formed without congressional authority and would be run by unaccountable and unelected Washington bureaucrats. These proposed policy guidelines and processes have the potential to change the permitting criteria and requirements for a large number of economic sectors, including tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, maritime shipping, traditional fuels and renewable energy development, mining and power production. It is imperative that we first understand the effects this policy will have on jobs as well as the vast coastal and inland economies, which collectively impact almost 80 percent of our entire country. I was pleased to see the passage of my amendment preventing the funding for the National Ocean Policy, which had the potential to take funds away from existing congressionally authorized activities critical to the ocean and coastal economies," **said Rep. Flores.**

In July 2010, President Obama signed an Executive Order to implement a new National Ocean Policy, which includes a mandatory Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning initiative to "zone" the oceans. The Natural Resources Committee has held five hearings related to either the mandatory ocean zoning or funding for agencies which are implementing the National Ocean Policy. Chairman Hastings sent two letters – the [first](#) on February 23, 2012 and the [second](#) on March 20, 2012 – to the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) asking questions about how funds have already been used to implement the Policy. The Committee has yet to receive a complete response to all of the questions and requests

for information. Chairman Hastings also sent a [letter](#) to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Appropriations asking for the inclusion of language to prohibit the use of funds to implement that National Ocean Policy in all of the FY13 Appropriations bills.

Chairman Hastings' letter was followed by an industry coalition [letter](#) signed by 83 industry groups and trade associations also asking that no funds be appropriated for implementing the Policy until there is time for further examination of the Policy's jobs and economic implications.

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