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Chairman Hastings: American Families Face Rapidly Rising Gas Prices Under Obama Administration Energy Policies

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) released the following statement today regarding President Obama’s energy speech:

“American families and small businesses are once again suffering from rapidly rising gasoline prices and the Obama Administration’s policies are making it worse. Since President Obama took office, the price of gasoline has increased a staggering 95 percent. As the American people pay for the Obama Premium at the pump, President Obama’s answer is to cancel onshore oil and natural gas leases, close off the vast majority of our offshore areas to new drilling, block the Keystone XL pipeline, delay and block the development of oil shale, and impose ocean zoning regulations that could limit all types of energy production – including renewable. All of these actions by the Obama Administration contribute to less American energy production and higher energy prices.”

“President Obama claims to support an ‘all-of-the-above’ energy approach, but his actions and policies show this is nothing more than a political sound bite. Look no further than the President’s own budget proposal for proof. President Obama’s FY13 budget released this month shows declining revenues from offshore drilling. The decline is the result of falling production that is a consequence of actions taken by this Administration. This is just one more example of how the President’s policies are stifling American energy production, stalling economic growth and increasing gasoline prices across the country.”

“House Republicans have passed bipartisan legislation to expand both onshore and offshore energy production. The Senate and President Obama should support this bill to create new jobs and lower energy costs.”

The Truth Behind Obama Administration Energy Claims

- **Obama Administration policies are NOT responsible for increased energy production.** President Obama is trying to take credit for previous Presidents Clinton and Bush’s pro-energy policies. The President is also failing to mention that the vast majority of increased production is occurring on private lands, not public. For example, [North Dakota](#) alone produced almost 16 million barrels of oil in January 2011, compared to only a little more than 2 million in January 2002. The majority of North Dakota’s production is on state and private land where the

Obama Administration's restrictive policies cannot hinder production. Any increase in oil and natural gas production is happening in spite of, not because of, President Obama's energy policies.

- **Obama Administration is NOT opening NEW offshore areas for energy production.** Last year, the Obama Administration released a [new draft offshore drilling five-year lease plan](#) that CLOSES the majority of the OCS to new energy production through 2017. There is LESS offshore acreage open for energy production now than there was when President Obama took office when nearly 100% of the OCS was open for production. The Administration's draft five-year plan prohibits offshore drilling in NEW areas and only allows lease sales to occur in the Gulf of Mexico and parts of the Arctic, areas that are already open.
- **President Obama's budget shows DECLINING revenue from offshore drilling.** According to the President's own [FY 13 budget proposal](#), in 2011, the federal government collected \$1 billion in OCS rents and bonuses from lease sales. In 2012—the last year of the current five year plan, the budget anticipates collecting over \$2 billion in rents and bonuses. In the first year of President Obama's five year plan, rents and bonuses fall by 58 percent to only \$852 million. By the last year of President Obama's five year plan, the government is only collecting \$569 million—a 72 percent drop from 2012 anticipated returns.
- **Obama Administration has BLOCKED energy production on federal lands.** The total onshore acreage leased under the Obama Administration in 2009 and 2010 is the lowest in over two decades, stretching back to at least 1984. Under the Obama Administration, 2010 had the LOWEST number of [onshore leases](#) issued since 1984.

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