

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, strongly supports H.R. 6082, the "Congressional Replacement of President Obama's Energy-Restricting and Job-Limiting Offshore Drilling Plan," which would amend the Proposed Final Outer Continental Shelf Leasing Program for 2012-2017 to include areas in the Mid-Atlantic, Alaska, and Southern California planning areas originally in the Draft Proposed Plan.

Significant quantities of oil and natural gas lie within America's Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), but the vast majority of these energy-rich areas have been under real and *de facto* moratoria for several decades. The Department of Interior's (DOI) OCS Leasing Program for 2012-2017, issued in January 2009, was the first iteration of a Leasing Program after the lapse of the Congressional moratorium and administrative withdrawal, both of which severely constrained areas available for exploration and production. The 2009 Draft Proposed Program significantly expanded the areas available for energy exploration and production and put the United States on a path to greater domestic energy production and less imported energy.

In 2009, the Administration scrapped the 2009 Draft Proposed Plan and in 2011 issued a Proposed Plan, which placed more than 86% of all federal OCS land off limits. This move was a tremendous step backwards for American domestic energy production. Energy research firm Wood Mackenzie calculates that full development of the offshore areas left off-limits by DOI's current plan—the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and most of the Eastern Gulf of Mexico—could provide hundreds of thousands of additional new jobs, more than \$300 billion in cumulative additional revenue for government, and nearly 4 million additional barrels oil equivalent per day by 2030.

In 2011, 9% of all new jobs were created by the oil and natural gas industry in spite of federal policies limiting new exploration and production. H.R. 6082 takes an important step in removing many of those limitations by including new energy-rich areas of America's OCS in the Leasing Program for 2012-2017. This bill corrects a strategic mistake made by DOI and places the U.S. on a course towards job creation, economic growth, and a more secure energy future.

**The Chamber strongly supports H.R. 6082, which would put the United States on a path to greater domestic energy production. The Chamber may consider including votes on, or in relation to, H.R. 6082 in our annual *How They Voted* scorecard.**

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten