

November 3, 2016

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

As representatives of millions of consumers, businesses, workers, and citizens across the United States, the undersigned groups urge your administration to finalize a 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program without removing any additional areas. We also urge you not to take any actions that would remove areas from consideration under future offshore leasing programs.

From manufacturing and agriculture to transportation and construction and beyond, domestic offshore oil and natural gas development helps sectors across the entire U.S. economy more affordably and reliably meet their energy needs, to the benefit of all Americans. It powers the nation's economy by supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs, generating tens of billions of dollars in economic activity, and producing billions of dollars in government revenue. In an increasingly tumultuous world, it also helps safeguard U.S. national security by reducing our exposure to geopolitical uncertainty and decreasing our dependence on foreign sources of energy.

With federal lands and waters estimated to contain nearly 70 percent of the nation's remaining oil and 26 percent of our natural gas, opportunities to access the country's estimated 90 billion barrels and 327 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered offshore oil and natural gas will be critical to securing the nation's long-term economic, energy, and national security.

In that regard, the areas included in the administration's 2017-2022 Proposed OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program (Proposed Program) -- the Western and Central Gulf of Mexico, portions of the Eastern Gulf of Mexico, Beaufort Sea, Chukchi Sea, and Cook Inlet -- must remain in the final program without any further removals. In addition, given that the country will continue to rely on oil and gas to meet the majority of our energy needs for decades to come, it is essential that future opportunities to consider leasing in these and other offshore areas of the United States, including the Atlantic, are preserved and not prematurely taken off the table through executive action.

The need for doing so is highlighted by broad and diverse public support and strong bipartisan backing from governors, other state elected officials, and members of Congress representing Alaska and Atlantic and Gulf Coast states that have requested their regions' inclusion in the offshore leasing program. Such support should be given strong deference.

We understand that environmental impact and safety are of tremendous concern for you, as they are to us. As you and your staff have noted, the country has "slowed our emissions and reduced the pace at which we are emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere faster than any other advanced nation," and in the first six months of 2016, carbon emissions from the domestic energy sector fell to their lowest level in twenty-five years. These developments have occurred at a time when the U.S. catapulted to become the world's largest producer of oil and natural gas, and in conjunction with unprecedented

steps taken by regulators and industry to further ensure the safe development of offshore energy. Underscored by the Proposed Program's finding that the removal of offshore lease sales would actually hurt the environment, it is clear that offshore energy development and environmental security can and do successfully coexist.

As you astutely stated in 2015, "I would rather us – with all the safeguards and standards that we have – be producing our oil and gas, rather than importing it, which is bad for our people, but is also potentially purchased from places that have much lower environmental standards than we do."

We agree, and urge you to protect the nation's social, economic, energy, and national security by finalizing a 2017-2022 OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program without removing any additional areas, and not taking action under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act or any other authority that would result in the removal of areas from consideration under future offshore leasing programs.

Respectfully,

ABB Inc.
Agricultural Retailers Association
Alaska State Chamber of Commerce
Alaska Trucking Association
American Chemistry Council
American Farm Bureau Federation®
American Highway Users Alliance
American Public Gas Association
American Real Estate
American Trucking Associations
BBT, LLC (Port St. Joe, FL)
Business Council of Alabama
Chemical Industry Council of Illinois
Clay County Chamber of Commerce
Colorado Farm Bureau
Committee of 100 for Economic Development, Inc.
Consumer Energy Alliance
Covington County Chamber of Commerce
CropLife America
Culhane's Irish Pub (Atlantic Beach, FL)
Dittman Research
East. St. Tammany Chamber of Commerce
Elite Parking Services of America
Energy Industries of Ohio
Farmington Chamber of Commerce
Florida Chamber of Commerce
Florida Transportation Builders' Association
Fluid Sealing Association
GATE
Georgia Chamber of Commerce
Greater Iberia Chamber of Commerce

Greater Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce
Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce
Grow Louisiana Coalition
Gulf Economic Survival Team
Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce
Jeff Davis Parish Business Alliance
Illinois Chamber of Commerce
Institute for 21st Century Energy
International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers
Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
LA 1 Coalition, Inc.
Loews Corporation
Logistics Supply Chain Coalition
Louisiana Association of Business and Industry
Louisiana Chemical Association
Louisiana Chemical Industry Alliance
Manufacture Alabama
MAP Consulting
Mexico Beach Charters
Microcom
Mississippi Energy Institute
Mississippi Manufacturers Association
Missourians for a Balanced Energy Future
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
Montana Chamber of Commerce
National Agricultural Aviation Association
National Association of Charterboat Operators
National Association of Manufacturers
National Association of Neighborhoods
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Nebraskans for Jobs and Energy Independence
Nevada Trucking Association
New Orleans Chamber of Commerce
North Carolina Chamber of Commerce
North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation
Ohio AgriBusiness Association
Ohio Cast Metals Association
Ohio Chamber of Commerce
One Acadiana
Palmetto Promise Institute
Panama City Boatmen Association
Partnership for Affordable Clean Energy
Portland Cement Association
Ports Association of Louisiana
Ports-to-Plains Alliance
Public Lands Council
Recreational Fishing Alliance Forgotten Coast Chapter

Resource Development Council for Alaska
Slover Consulting
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council
South Carolina Chamber of Commerce
South Carolina Manufacturers Alliance
South Central Industrial Association
Southern Chemical Corporation
St. Mary Chamber of Commerce
St. Tammany West Chamber of Commerce
Steel Manufacturers Association
Steel Tank Institute/Steel Plate Fabricators Association
Tennessee Trucking Association
Texas Association of Business
Texas Association of Manufacturers
Texas Trucking Association
The Fertilizer Institute
The Plaza Group
Transportation Institute
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Manufacturers Association
Virginia Trucking Association
W.D. Scott Group, Inc.
Washington County Chamber of Commerce
West Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce
Wisconsin Industrial Energy Group
Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce
Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association

cc: The Honorable Sally Jewell, U.S. Secretary of the Interior