

March 15, 2023

Dear Chair McMorris-Rogers, Ranking Member Pallone, Chairman Bruce Westerman and Ranking Member Raúl M. Grijalva:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing a diverse coalition of free market, consumer, and taxpayer advocates, we write to express the need for regulatory certainty for to enable the use of all of America's offshore energy resources. The United States is blessed with more than enough renewable and non-renewable energy resources to meet our domestic energy needs. This natural wealth should provide abundant and affordable energy for American businesses and consumers, while insulating the nation from foreign energy coercion.

However, federal mismanagement of America's natural resources has created market distortions and imposed costs on American businesses and consumers. In recent years, as the federal government has sought to inhibit or slow-walk offshore [oil and gas development](#), consumer gas prices have [skyrocketed](#). Across its first 19 months in office, the current administration leased [the fewest acres](#) for onshore and offshore oil and gas development of any administration since the Second World War. As the federal government's [own data shows](#), input fuel represents a major component of the cost of generating electricity. Natural gas is the single largest generating source of electricity in the United States and efforts to curtail its production have a tangible effect upon consumer prices.

At the same time, the current federal leasing system for offshore wind lacks a congressional requirement for a predictable leasing schedule. Without mandating that these resources periodically be made available to the public, federal wind leases remain at the mercy of the executive branch. Federal interference should not preclude consumers and businesses from enjoying the potential benefits of offshore wind electricity. With the benefit of [stronger and more consistent](#) breezes at sea, offshore wind generation is both more efficient and reliable than its onshore counterpart. Offshore wind turbines can also be built at a [larger scale](#), allowing for even greater electricity generation. Moreover, by identifying areas of strong evening wind speeds with high evening electricity demand, offshore wind generation [help to meet](#) peak electricity demand.

By removing discretionary intervention from the management of offshore resources, Congress can facilitate the diversification of the American energy industry. Among electricity utilities who use different sources of generation, this diversification enables both consumer choice and price competition. Moreover, during extreme weather events or periods of high input fuel prices, a diversified energy industry is capable of [balancing shortfalls](#) with greater production.

We also recognize that the federal government should not be in the business of picking winners and losers in the economy. Nor should the federal government dictate which kinds of energy are or are not available. That is why we are calling for legislation that removes federal interference in both offshore fossil fuel and renewable energy leasing.

To unlock our nation's offshore resources, Congress should build upon provisions within the [Inflation Reduction Act](#) that tie offshore oil and gas leasing to offshore wind leasing. The publication of, and compliance with, schedules for both fossil fuel and renewable energy lease sales should [similarly be mandatory](#). This would provide greater certainty around access to federal offshore resources. Congress should also streamline the regulations that govern the federal approval process of offshore leases. By clearly defining the scope of factors that must be considered by federal agencies, Congress can prevent 'delay to deny' litigation. Together, these reforms would help to unlock the nation's offshore resources.

We thank the House majority for their commitment to unleashing American energy, promoting competition, and lowering consumer prices.

Respectfully,

Oliver McPherson-Smith, PhD
Director of Energy, Trade, and
Environmental Policy
American Consumer Institute

Mario H. Lopez
President
Hispanic Leadership Fund

Andrew Langer
President
Institute for Liberty

Saulius "Saul" Anuzis
President
60 Plus Foundation

Matthew Kandrach
President
Consumer Action for a Strong Economy

Brandon Arnold
Executive Vice President
National Taxpayers Union

George Landrith
President
Frontiers of Freedom

David Williams
President
Taxpayers Protection Alliance

James L. Martin
Founder/Chairman
60 Plus Association

Seton Motley
President
Less Government

Philip Rossetti
Senior Fellow
Energy & Environment
R Street institute

Tom Giovanetti
President
Institute for Policy Innovation

Steve Pociask
President/CEO
American Consumer Institute