



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

May 10, 2011
(House Rules)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 1231 – To amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to require that each 5-year offshore oil and gas leasing program offer leasing in the areas with the most prospective oil and gas resources, to establish a domestic oil and natural gas production goal, and for other purposes.

(Rep. Hastings, R-WA, and 69 cosponsors)

The Administration is committed to promoting safe and responsible domestic oil and gas production as part of a broad energy strategy that will protect consumers and reduce our dependence on foreign oil. That strategy, among other things, includes a balanced process to open new areas for leasing, prepare for the possibility of oil spills, and encourage responsible development of existing leases. The Administration opposes H.R. 1231, which would undermine and circumvent the transparent public process for determining which new areas are appropriate to lease.

H.R. 1231 would require the Department of the Interior (DOI) to open new areas on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) to leasing without any discretion to determine which areas are actually appropriate and safe for exploration and development. The bill would have the effect of mandating OCS lease sales along the entire East Coast, offshore California, and elsewhere, without providing states and local citizens the opportunity to share views about where exploration should happen.

The Administration is developing a 5-year (2012-2017) comprehensive plan for offshore oil and gas exploration and production that incorporates lessons learned from the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. This plan, developed through a public review process, will assess which areas of the OCS are appropriate for future oil and gas leasing. In addition, the Administration is focusing on resources that are already available for development under existing plans. A recent DOI report shows that about 70 percent of leased offshore acres are not being explored or developed. Given the untapped potential of those areas, the Administration is pursuing a number of policies to promote timely and responsible development of those OCS leases.

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