

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 16, 2009

The Hon. Ken Salazar  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C. Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We would like to express our strong support for the Draft Proposed Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil & Gas Leasing Program (DPP) for 2010 to 2015 put forward by the U.S. Mineral Management Service (MMS). Opening up offshore areas included in the DPP is a beneficial and necessary step toward a better and more secure energy future for America. In this time of economic crisis and volatility in world energy markets, we believe it is crucial that the United States utilize all of its available resources.

The exploration and development outlined in the DPP offer potentially tremendous benefits. Even conservative estimates from MMS predict reserves of 288 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 52 billion barrels of oil – enough to maintain current production for 105 and 71 years, respectively. Of course, current production cannot be expected to account for our energy needs in the long term, which makes it even more essential that we take the appropriate measures for increasing our energy supplies.

While we know that fossil fuels cannot be the entirety of our national energy strategy, and we firmly support efforts to develop alternative and renewable energy sources, the fact remains that natural gas and petroleum will be a large part of the U.S. energy landscape for many decades to come. By 2025, these fuels are projected to account for 65 percent of domestic consumption, comprising an even greater share of transportation and home heating costs. Without significantly more production, commodity prices can be expected to rise dramatically. The effects of sudden energy price increases are acutely felt by my constituents, many of whom live in poor and rural areas. Offshore exploration can help alleviate these pains by ensuring a more constant fuel supply.

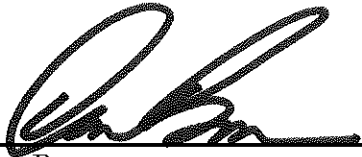
OCS exploration will also put many people to work during a period of record unemployment, giving our economy a much-needed boost. Alaska alone could expect 35,000 well-paying jobs annually, with businesses large and small across America benefiting from increased demand for steel pipelines, construction workers, and advanced engineering and logistics services.

Overall, there is a sound case for approving the DPP for 2010-2015. We also understand that the DC Circuit Court of Appeals has found deficiencies in the 2007-2012 plan which, if not remedied by the Department of the Interior, could result in the court throwing out the entire Five-Year Plan for 2007-2012. We sincerely hope that the Interior Department will do all it can to expedite the relevant environmental analysis in order to help put the 2007-2012 OCS Program back

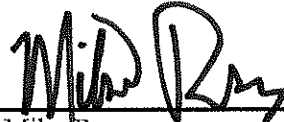
on track. As the federal government stands to lose \$3 billion in revenues from leases if the Program cannot be continued, we are sure you see the critical importance of this issue.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you on energy programs and solutions in the future.

Respectfully yours,



Dan Boren  
Member of Congress



Mike Ross  
Member of Congress



Jim Matheson  
Member of Congress



Solomon Ortiz  
Member of Congress



Charlie Melancon  
Member of Congress



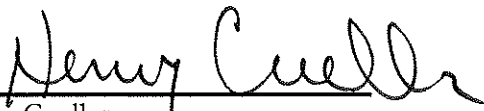
Gene Green  
Member of Congress



Bobby Bright  
Member of Congress



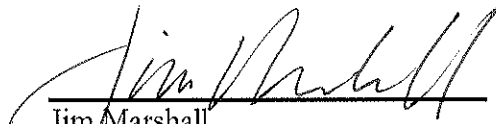
Jim Costa  
Member of Congress




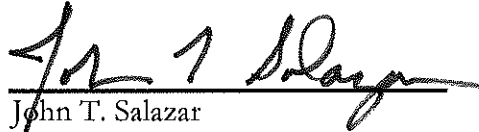
Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress




Chet Edwards  
Member of Congress

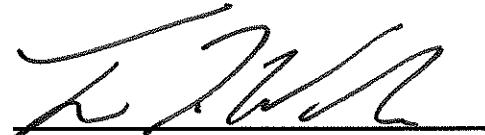
  
Jim Marshall  
Member of Congress

  
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