



May 20, 2025

The Honorable Pete Stauber
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Stauber and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of National Taxpayers Union, the nation's oldest taxpayer advocacy organization, I write to express our support for two pro-energy pieces of legislation ahead of the Committee's legislative hearing. NTU is proud to endorse H.R. 513, the Offshore Lands Authorities Act, and H.R. 2556, the Comprehensive Offshore Resource Evaluation Act, sponsored by Representatives Higgins and Hunt, respectively. Together, these proposals will help unleash American energy dominance by leveraging America's abundant offshore resources.

As you know, offshore oil and gas play a crucial role in America's energy mix to keep our economy running strong. Roughly 14% of all crude oil is produced from offshore wells from the Outer Continental Shelf, according to the Energy Information Administration. The industry supports hundreds of thousands of good paying jobs, generates billions of dollars in revenues for the government, and has numerous downstream benefits to a host of various industries such as plastics. From an environmental perspective, no other country produces fossil fuels more responsibly or safely than the United States.

Despite the clear benefits of tapping our resource rich waters far from the coast, the last administration was particularly hostile towards the industry. Influenced by the far-left, it issued the fewest offshore lease sales in a generation (including zero in 2024), dragged its feet on a five-year leasing plan, and raised royalty rates on offshore oil production to 16.66%—a whopping 33% increase. This resulted in an atmosphere of uncertainty for the private sector and undermined the United States' investment attractiveness.

Most concerning was President Joe Biden's eleventh hour decision to withdraw 625 million coastal acres from future offshore oil and natural gas leasing. While not every acre will be suitable for exploration and development, blanket bans directly undermine energy independence and economic growth. This de-facto ban on offshore drilling is particularly harmful to resource rich areas in the Gulf of America and along the Alaskan Coast.

That's what makes enactment of H.R. 513 so important during this critical time. This legislation would rightly overturn former President Biden's misguided offshore drilling ban and create a new process for

withdrawals for future leasing determinations. It would reopen lease sales in those closed areas for auction consideration and require withdrawals be subject to congressional disapproval proceedings so Congress can ensure greater accountability over future unilateral withdrawals. H.R. 513 will help safeguard America's energy future against ideologically-driven administrations hellbent on eliminating our ability to produce energy offshore. **NTU supports Rep. Higgin's Offshore Lands Authorities Act.**

Promoting energy independence must also provide clarity and certainty before the auction process begins. H.R. 2556 would accomplish that by directing relevant agencies to undertake a more accurate accounting of undiscovered offshore oil and gas reserves. We believe this legislation would allow for the federal government to have reliable data to help drive energy planning and development based on science. **NTU Supports Rep. Hunt's Comprehensive Offshore Resource Enforcement Act.**

Oil and natural gas are the backbone of America's economic strength, and private sector producers need long-term certainty from the federal government to continue to meet the surging demand. The two bills before you today will help meet that demand and give the market the tools it needs to responsibly explore and develop in federal waters. We urge you to support both pieces of legislation during the markup and look forward to helping these bills become law.

Sincerely,

Thomas Aiello
Senior Director of Government Affairs