



June 24, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Westerman and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of National Taxpayers Union (NTU), the nation's oldest taxpayer advocacy organization, we write to express our views on legislation slated for consideration before the House Committee on Natural Resources on June 25, 2025. NTU applauds the Committee for your continued efforts to advance proposals that save taxpayer resources, reduce government burdens, and promote American energy dominance. As such, NTU strongly urges Committee members to support H.R. 2556, the Comprehensive Offshore Resource Enhancement Act, authored by Representative Wesley Hunt.

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 revenue 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 toward the industry. 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.

Uncertainty from Washington can be destructive for capital intensive industries like offshore oil and gas production. Thankfully, the CORE Act would deliver greater certainty through more consistent mapping and geophysical and geological surveys from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. H.R. 2556 would accomplish that by directing relevant agencies to undertake a more accurate accounting of undiscovered offshore oil and gas reserves. This would result in an honest oil and gas assessment process to ensure each five-year offshore leasing schedule follows the most accurate information available.

This legislation will help increase domestic oil production within the Gulf of America, bolster energy security, and yield more revenues for states and the federal government.

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. H.R. 2556 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 this piece of legislation during the markup and look forward to helping this bill become law.

Sincerely,

Thomas Aiello
Senior Director of Government Affairs