



Melissa Velez-Morales

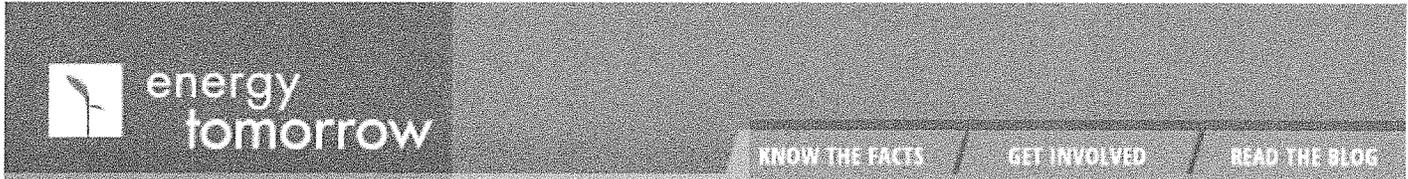
From: Masser, Michelle
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2016 2:19 PM
To: Harris, Laura
Cc: Melissa Velez-Morales
Subject: FW: Offshore Energy and Future Energy Security

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Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2016 10:52 AM
To: Masser, Michelle <clerkmichelle@mtolivetwp.org>
Subject: Offshore Energy and Future Energy Security

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May 11, 2016

Offshore Energy and Future Energy Security

Dear Michelle,

A recent article in [The Hill](#) suggests that low oil prices have "changed the politics surrounding energy" by "easing pressure" for the White House and Congress to enact pro-energy policies.

In other words, the U.S. energy renaissance has been so successful that policymakers feel no sense of urgency about taking action to maintain our position as a world energy leader.

The Facts about Seismic Exploration

Seismic surveying is an advanced, carefully regulated technology that is critical to understanding offshore resource potential. The Obama administration's decision to allow seismic surveys in the Atlantic was a step in the right direction, and moving forward is essential to updating decades-old data. [Learn more about seismic technology.](#)

Although the assessment is not entirely accurate – both House and Senate recently passed bipartisan energy legislation, after all – it does raise serious concerns. Policymakers must support long-term energy policies that ensure our position as the world's leading oil and natural gas producer is not put at risk.

The stakes are especially clear in the case of offshore energy exploration. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is in the process of finalizing its 2017-2022 leasing plan, which will dictate which offshore areas are open to energy exploration. With 87 percent of government-controlled offshore acreage off limits to energy development, expanding access to additional areas should be a top priority.

So far, there's room for improvement. A draft plan announced last year by BOEM would have opened the Atlantic to exploration. But earlier this year, the administration backtracked, removing the Atlantic despite strong statewide public support for offshore development in North Carolina (64 percent), South Carolina (67 percent) and Virginia (65 percent).

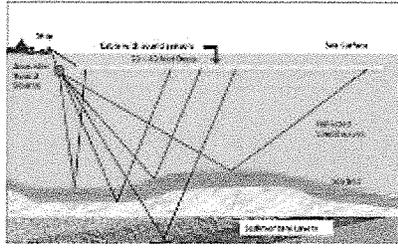
That makes it all the more critical that the final leasing plan maintain maximum opportunities in the Gulf of Mexico and the Arctic, where Alaska's Beaufort and Chukchi seas are estimated to contain more technically recoverable oil and natural gas than the Atlantic and Pacific coasts combined. Given the long lead time for offshore projects, taking these options off the table in the next five-year plan could negatively impact our ability to expand energy security for at least a decade.

How important are offshore resources to U.S. energy security? In 2010, over 30 percent of the oil and 11 percent of the natural gas produced in the United States was produced in the Gulf of Mexico. How much more energy, and how many more jobs, could we produce if we expanded access beyond the 13 percent of federal offshore acreage where it's currently allowed? If BOEM's final leasing plan prioritizes future energy security, we can find out.

Sincerely,

Jack Gerard
President and CEO
API

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Natural Gas



Rapid growth in natural gas production, thanks to vast shale deposits and hydraulic fracturing, is reviving America's manufacturing and other sectors while helping reduce U.S. carbon emissions to a 20-year low.

Oil



U.S. crude oil production has reached its highest point since 1997, due to production from shale and other tight rock formations, while reducing imports to their lowest level in more than 20 years.



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