

# Offshore Operators Committee



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Via Regulations.gov

Ms. Kelly Hammerle, Chief

National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program Development and Coordination Branch Leasing Division

Office of Strategic Resources, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (WAM-LD)

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Subject: Comments on the 2023-2028 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program

On Friday, July 1, 2022, the Interior Department released its 2023-2028 “Proposed Program” for the Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (National OCS Program). The Offshore Operators Committee (“OOC”), a non-profit organization engaged in the responsible development of all forms of offshore energy as well as carbon capture and storage, is concerned with the possibility of no lease sales from 2023 to 2028.

The leaseholder and supporting contractor community is a highly integrated community that design, build, operate and decommission assets associated with offshore energy development in all forms. Long-term leasing interruptions of any type that could occur under this proposed plan put all forms of offshore energy development on the OCS at risk.

The requirements of the OCS Lands Act (“OCSLA”) create the offshore industry stability needed to foster healthy competition, stable good paying jobs, and continued development of offshore energy technology that enable U.S. energy leadership around the world. At a time when our nation is suffering from skyrocketing energy prices and increasingly turning to foreign nations to supply our

needs, scheduling zero offshore lease sales for the next 5 years would be a devastating blow to the U.S. energy industry and do irreparable damage to our nation's energy independence.

The OOC supports a robust National OCS Program that continues to support an entire network of leaseholders and critical contractors that deliver the energy to drive the U.S. economy as well as support the rapid deployment of offshore wind during this transition to a diversified domestic offshore energy portfolio. Continued American offshore exploration, development, and production will provide greater economic and energy security benefits to U.S. companies, workers, and consumers. Additionally, Gulf of Mexico offshore production is recognized as some of the least carbon-intensive production in the world.<sup>1</sup>

The Biden administration is in the unique position to be the first administration in recent history, either Republican or Democrat, to reject the need and benefit of a strong domestic energy sector through continued offshore leasing and development. The United States must remain in control of our own energy future by maximizing our domestic energy production potential. It is imperative that the 2023-2028 Final National OCS Program includes the 10 proposed Gulf of Mexico lease sales and the lease sale proposed for the Cook Inlet in Alaska.

Evan Zimmerman  
Executive Director  
Offshore Operators Committee



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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of the Interior, "OCS Oil & Natural Gas: Potential Lifecycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Social Cost of Carbon" <https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/oil-and-gas-energy-program/Leasing/Five-Year-Program/2017-2022/OCS-Report-BOEM-2016-065---OCS-Oil-and-Natural-Gas---Potential-Lifecycle-GHG-Emissions-and-Social-Cost-of-Carbon.pdf> November 2016.