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As gas prices rise, President blocks energy production and job creation in vast majority of America's offshore areas

"Obama Moratorium" defies American people's support for new offshore drilling

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04) released the following statement regarding President Obama's announcement that his Administration will delay a new offshore drilling plan until 2012 and include only a fraction of offshore land that was available under the 2010-2015 lease plan:

"With this announcement, the Obama Administration is attempting to pull the wool over our eyes. President Obama's rhetoric conveys support for increasing American oil and natural gas production, while the reality is he's proposing a plan that will close more areas to drilling than it opens and the few areas still available won't be open for years.

"When the plan closes off more areas than it opens and could delay any new drilling until after President Obama's term in office, this plan really deserves to be called the 'Obama Moratorium.'

"President Obama's plan is to make the American people wait longer and receive less – both for more American-made energy and new jobs. Hardly anyone would consider that a good deal – in fact, most would probably call it a clever trick.

"The moratoria on offshore drilling were lifted in 2008 and over 500 million acres became available for energy production and job creation. The Bush Administration's 2010-2015 leasing plan would have resulted in new areas being opened this July, yet the 'Obama Moratorium' plan would close the vast majority of these 500 million new acres and allow only a tiny fraction to be open in the future.

"Along with delaying new energy production, the President is also delaying the creation of millions of new jobs that would revitalize our economy and generate billions of dollars in revenue to the federal government that would help reduce the record deficits run up in the past year. The costs are too high for this President to continue blocking valuable American energy production.

"It is my sincere hope that Congress will act, in a similar bipartisan fashion that we used to end the moratorium, and pass the Republican American Energy Act that will put a plan in place this year to truly open America's Outer Continental Shelf to energy production and job creation."

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