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CONTACT: [Spencer Pederson](#), [Crystal Feldman](#), or [Jill Strait](#)
202-226-9019

Hastings Calls on Administration to Move Forward with Other Delayed and Canceled Offshore Lease Sales

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today the Obama Administration’s Interior Department conducted the first offshore lease sale in the Gulf of Mexico since the tragic explosion and oil spill that occurred nearly 20 months ago. With just 17 days left this year, the Administration narrowly avoided making 2011 the first year since 1953 without an offshore lease sale.

However, one conveniently-timed lease sale does not make up for the other offshore lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico and offshore Virginia that have been delayed or canceled by the Obama Administration. By delaying and cancelling lease sales, the Obama Administration is blocking American energy production, preventing American job creation and forfeiting much-needed revenue.

“Acting out of political expediency, not economic necessity, the Department of the Interior finally held the first offshore lease sale of this year. However, don’t be fooled—this Administration has delayed and canceled multiple lease sales that were previously scheduled,” **said House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings.** *“In spite of the hundreds of thousands of jobs that could be created by opening up more offshore areas to energy production, this Administration has repeatedly stood in the way.”*

“House Republicans have passed three offshore energy bills that would guarantee lease sales that the Obama Administration has delayed or canceled as well as open up the most productive areas of our Outer Continental Shelf for American energy production. While I’m pleased to see this lease sale carried out, the Administration must take immediate action to resume the other sales they’ve delayed and canceled.”

The current five-year plan (2007-2012), established by the Bush Administration, included the following offshore lease sales: lease sale #220 off the Virginia Coast in 2011, Gulf of Mexico lease sale #216 in 2011, and Gulf of Mexico lease sale #222 to take place in 2012. [H.R. 1230, The Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act](#), which passed the House with bipartisan support, would require all of these lease sales to occur before June 1, 2012 or within one year after enactment of the bill.

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