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FRANK PALLONE, JR., NJ
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RUSH D. HOLT, NJ
RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, AZ
MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO, GU
JIM COSTA, CA
DAN BOREN, OK
GREGORIO SABLAN, MP
MARTIN HEINRICH, NM
GEORGE MILLER, CA
EDWARD J. MARKEY, MA
PETER A. DEFAZIO, OR
MAURICE D. HINCHEY, NY
DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN, VI
DIANA DEGETTE, CO
RON KIND, WI
LOIS CAPPS, CA
JAY INSLEE, WA
JOE BACA, CA
STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN, SD
JOHN P. SARBANES, MD
CAROL SHEA-PORTER, NH
NIKI TSONGAS, MA
FRANK KRATOVIL, JR., MD
PEDRO R. PIERLUISI, PR

JAMES H. ZOIA
CHIEF OF STAFF

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

DOC HASTINGS, WA
RANKING REPUBLICAN MEMBER
DON YOUNG, AK
ELTON GALLEGLY, CA
JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR., TN
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CYNTHIA LUMMIS, WY
TOM McCLINTOCK, CA
BILL CASSIDY

TODD YOUNG
REPUBLICAN CHIEF OF STAFF

March 5, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

RECEIVED
2009 MAR -6 AM 8:33
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Secretary Salazar,

We are writing to stress that the upcoming Central Gulf Oil and Gas Lease Sale 208 cannot and should not be delayed. This Sale scheduled for March 18, 2009 should go forward as planned to increase investment in American energy, strengthen our nation's energy independence, and create thousands of jobs in the Gulf of Mexico region.

The Central Gulf Planning Area has produced more offshore oil and gas than any other Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) area, and the annual Central Gulf Sale is the largest annual oil and gas lease sale held by the United States. For the first time since 1988, this Sale will offer the so-called "181 South" area consisting of more than 4.2 million acres as mandated by the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006.

As our nation continues to experience a serious economic crisis and face severe energy challenges, it is more important than ever that the Department truly demonstrate its commitment to President Obama's expressed goal of implementing a fully comprehensive energy strategy. However, after only a little more than a month in office, the Department has already established a clear track record of opposing oil and gas development in our country:

- **February 4th** – The Department announced that the Bureau of Land Management would withdraw areas offered for oil and gas leases in Utah.

- **February 10th** - The Department announced a decision to essentially restore the OCS moratoria by unreasonably delaying the new 5-year leasing program and mandating reports that are designed to result in long-term withdrawal of OCS areas from oil and gas leasing.

- **February 25th** - The Department announced a decision to unreasonably delay the new round of oil shale research, demonstration, and development (R, D & D) leases.

If the Department decides to delay Central Gulf Oil and Gas Lease Sale 208, it will further establish a dangerous trend of opposition to American-made energy and the creation of new American jobs in the energy sector. Additionally, a delay of this sale would throw obstacles in the way of providing access to American oil and gas that the Energy Information Administration says the Nation will need well past 2030 and also discourage energy companies from pursuing new opportunities in our country.

As the decision making process continues, we strongly encourage the Department to move forward on schedule with the Central Gulf Lease 208 sale that may bring in billions of dollars to the U.S. Treasury, open an entirely new frontier of the Gulf for oil development, and save and create thousands of jobs. In addition, the 181 South Area will share revenue with the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas helping those states deal with this economic downturn. MMS's own estimates say that this sale could result in production of approximately .8 to 1.3 billion barrels of oil and 3.3 to 5.4 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. These are resources that are critically needed by the American consumers and will help us offset our future energy needs.

Failure to move forward with this lease sale at this critical juncture may threaten not just future leasing in this area of the Gulf but our entire OCS program. Preparation for a lease sale as large as the annual Central Gulf Sale requires a massive commitment of human and financial capital by dozens of companies. If these companies no longer trust that the government will hold the lease sales that it announces, many will no longer bid or they will reduce their bids, resulting in lower government receipts and less energy produced.

We hope to hear from you quickly that you plan to allow this lease sale to move forward and look forward to working with you to open other areas equally rich in resources for the American people.

Sincerely,

Rep. Doc Hastings (WA)
Ranking Member, Committee on
Natural Resources

Rep. Doug Lamborn (CO)
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Energy and Mineral Resources

Rep. Rob Bishop (UT)
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
National Parks, Forests and Public Lands

Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA)
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Water and Power

Rep. Louie Gohmert (TX)

Rep. Mike Coffman (CO)

Rep. John Fleming (LA)

Rep. Bill Cassidy (LA)

Rep. Jeff Flake (AZ)

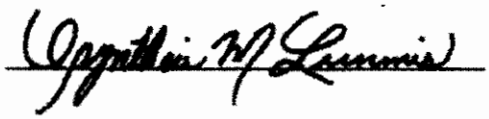
M.C.

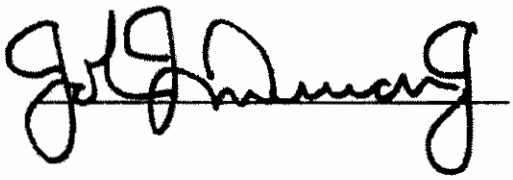
Rep. Jason Chaffetz (UT)

Rep. Don Young (AK)

Rep. Elton Gallegly (CA)

Rep. Paul Broun (GA)





THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

MAY 0 4 2009

The Honorable Louie Gohmert
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Gohmert:

Thank you for your letter dated March 5, 2009, cosigned by your colleagues, supporting the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Lease Sale 208 in the Central Planning Area of the Gulf of Mexico. A similar letter is being sent to each signer of your letter.

On March 18, 2009, the Minerals Management Service (MMS) held Sale 208, as scheduled. I was honored to participate in Sale 208 and publicly announced the bidding results. The MMS received 476 bids on 348 tracts, offering $703 million in high bids, demonstrating the continued interest industry has in the Central Gulf of Mexico. Evaluation of the high bids to ensure fair market value has already begun.

I recently met with the American public on the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coasts, as well as in Alaska, to get input that will help ensure that we develop the right kind of energy in the right places on the OCS.

The security of our energy supply and stability of energy prices remain significant concerns for the Nation. Even as the Department of the Interior aggressively pursues renewable energy opportunities, domestic production of oil and gas is crucial, including oil and natural gas from the OCS. The need to continue to produce our traditional domestic energy resources and develop renewable energy resources, while remaining responsible stewards of our environment has never been greater.

Again, thank you for sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

Ken Salazar

Ken Salazar

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2010

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary
Department of Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

We are writing to express our serious concern over reports that Minerals Management Service (MMS) Director Liz Birnbaum deliberately withheld information from you regarding public comments received on the five-year plan for new offshore oil and gas drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

According to emails uncovered under the Freedom of Information Act, Director Birnbaum directly contacted a number of Department of Interior (DOI) employees explaining her rationale to withhold important information on the proposed OCS Oil & Gas Leasing Program for 2010 to 2015. As you are now no doubt aware, the DOI received approximately 530,000 comments, and according to Ms. Birnbaum's email, with the overwhelming majority in support of off-shore drilling.

We find it outrageous that members of your staff would purposely delay the release of public input from hundreds of thousands of concerned Americans. The issue of responsible offshore energy production should not be politicized and delayed through bureaucratic fiat simply because your employees do not like the result of the comments.

Along with President Obama, you have regularly expressed the need for a comprehensive energy plan that includes the responsible production of fossil fuels on the Outer Continental Shelf. The mounting evidence is clear; the policies and practices displayed by your employees, along with your recent decision to delay the release of a new leasing plan by three years until 2012, are not matching the rhetoric of this Administration and running contrary to the will of the American people.

You stated in April of last year that you desired to maximize public opportunity to "give us guidance on what it is that they want to do" because "these are not decisions that are going to be made behind closed doors." The actions of your staff, combined with your abrupt decision to ensure virtually no new lease sales will occur during President Obama's term in office, run in obvious conflict to your previous statements.

We respectfully request an explanation of why you continue to employ individuals who seemingly seek to suppress public opinion, along with a detailed explanation of why you have changed your position to proceed with an OCS Leasing Program, since it is well-supported by the American people. We appreciate your consideration of this matter and look forward to a timely reply.

Sincerely,

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Phil Gingrey

Ron Paul

Marsha Blackburn

Kevin Brady

Mike Ryan (AL)

Joe Pitts

Doug Lamborn

Adam Schiff

Pete Olson

Patrick McHenry

Mike Burgess

Stan Kiang

Virginia Foxx

Peter Roskam

Lynn Jenkins

Joe Wilson

Kenny Marchant

Rodney Alexander

Paul C Broun

John Shadegg

Louie Gohmert

Wally Herger

Joe Heinrich

Steve Chabot OH-3

Lynn A Westmoreland GA-3

Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Randy Neugebauer

Robert B. Aderholt

Kevin McCarthy

Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Joe Barton

Sam Johnson

Frank Kingston

Jeff Flake

Zach Wamp

Mary Fallin

Mark Souder

Mike Pence

Robert E. Andrews

Ken Calvert

Peter Hoekstra

Spencer Bachus

Dan Burton

Trent Franks

Bob Goodlatte

Donald Manzullo

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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2010

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary
Department of Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

We are writing to express our serious concern over reports that Minerals Management Service (MMS) Director Liz Birnbaum deliberately withheld information from you regarding public comments received on the five-year plan for new offshore oil and gas drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

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Sincerely,

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Phil Gingrey

Ron Paul

Marsha Blackburn

Kevin Brady

Mike Ryan (AL)

Joe Pitts

Doug Lamborn

Adam Schiff

Pete Olson

Patrick Meehan

Mike Burgess

Stan Kinzy

Virginia Foxx

Peter Roskam

Lynn Jenkins

Joe Wilson

Kenny Marchant

Rodney Alexander

Paul C Broun

John Shadegg

Louie Gohmert

Wally Herger

Jo Ann Emerson

Steve Chabot OH-3

Steve Austria OH-3

Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Randy Neugebauer

Robert B. Aderholt

Kevin McCarthy

Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Jo Bonner

Scott Garrett

Peter King

Jeff Fortenberry

Sam Graves

Sam Johnson

Mike Pence

Frank Wolf

Bob Goodlatte

Mary Fallin

Donald Manzullo

Mark Souder

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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 21, 2010

The Honorable Kenneth L. Salazar
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W. – Room 6156
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

We write today concerning the moratorium announced by the U.S. Department of Interior on May 6, 2010, which halted the issuance of any new offshore drilling permits by the Minerals Management Service (MMS) in the offshore regions of the United States. We certainly understand and support the need for an in-depth federal investigation into the causes of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and we look forward to working with you on legislation that appropriately guards against a similar incident ever happening again while ensuring that our domestic producers of all sizes will continue to be able to produce offshore. However, because the date for lifting the drilling permit moratorium remains uncertain, we are concerned that this uncertainty might jeopardize the ongoing long-term viability of the shallow water development of vital oil and natural gas resources.

Specifically, we are concerned that there are approximately 57 shallow water rigs currently operating in the Gulf of Mexico, and that as many as 50 of those rigs within the next six weeks will be unable to work if the moratorium is not lifted for shallow water drilling operations. Additionally, at least 5,000 direct jobs from the shallow water rigs alone would be lost in the Gulf Coast region.

Shallow water activities throughout the Gulf of Mexico have operated without major incident for decades. Deepwater operations such as those associated with the unfortunate Deepwater Horizon incident involve very different risks and challenges than those for shallow water jackup rigs and other platforms. At the outset, jackup and platform rigs in shallow water (less than 1000 feet in depth) employ "blow-out preventers" (BOPs) that are positioned above the surface of the water. These surface BOPs are accessible for regular inspection, maintenance and repair, and can be controlled directly or remotely in emergency situations. Shallow water drilling sites also involve predictable and mature reservoirs that predominantly consist of clean natural gas resources. Furthermore, a large percentage of shallow water wells require positive external stimulation to produce the flow of oil or gas, thus significantly limiting the risk of loss of control.

Therefore, we respectfully request that next week when you issue your recommendations to the President that you also recommend and allow for the immediate and proper processing and issuance of new shallow water drilling permits for the Gulf of Mexico region. Domestic energy resources are vital to the national security and economic growth of our country and our country requires the safe, effective and steady development of its offshore oil and gas resources.

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We appreciate your immediate attention to this critically important matter, and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can ever be of any assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Member of Congress GENE GREEN

Member of Congress

Member of Congress SOLOMON ORTIZ

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress SILVESTRE REYES

Member of Congress

Member of Congress BOREN

Member of Congress JEB HENSARLING

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress BOSWELL

Member of Congress

Member of Congress CHARLES GONZALEZ

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress JOHN CARTER

Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

Member of Congress Courtney

Member of Congress

Member of Congress Trent Franks

Member of Congress Shimkus

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress Cole

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Member of Congress

Member of Congress Ami Cao

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress Bachmann

Member of Congress Dallas Personally

Member of Congress

Member of Congress Rogers

Member of Congress Granger

Member of Congress Neugebauer

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487340

We appreciate your immediate attention to this critically important matter, and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can ever be of any assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Gene Green
Member of Congress

Charles Boustany
Member of Congress

Solomon Ortiz
Member of Congress

Tim Murphy
Member of Congress

Ruben Hinojosa
Member of Congress

Todd Akin
Member of Congress

Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress

Phil Gingrey
Member of Congress

Dan Boren
Member of Congress

Jeb Hensarling
Member of Congress

Charlie Melancon
Member of Congress

Michael McCaul
Member of Congress

John Salazar
Member of Congress

Kenny Marchant
Member of Congress

Leonard Boswell
Member of Congress

Peter King
Member of Congress

Charles Gonzalez
Member of Congress

Harry Teague
Member of Congress

Ciro Rodriguez
Member of Congress

Kevin Brady
Member of Congress

Gregg Harper
Member of Congress

Rodney Alexander
Member of Congress

John Carter
Member of Congress

Ted Poe
Member of Congress

Steve Scalise
Member of Congress

Parker Griffith
Member of Congress

Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress

Pete Olson
Member of Congress

Bill Cassidy
Member of Congress

Blaine Leutkemeyer
Member of Congress

Lynn Westmoreland
Member of Congress

Doc Hastings
Member of Congress

John Culberson
Member of Congress

Christopher Lee
Member of Congress

Mac Thornberry
Member of Congress

Joe Barton
Member of Congress

Trent Franks
Member of Congress

John Shimkus
Member of Congress

Tom Cole
Member of Congress

Ed Whitfield
Member of Congress

Howard Coble
Member of Congress

Lamar Smith
Member of Congress

Denny Rehberg
Member of Congress

Sam Johnson
Member of Congress

Michael Conaway
Member of Congress

Jo Bonner
Member of Congress

Joseph Cao
Member of Congress

Fred Upton
Member of Congress

John Fleming
Member of Congress

Spencer Bachus
Member of Congress

Michael Burgess
Member of Congress

Al Green
Member of Congress

Mike Rogers (AL)
Member of Congress

Kay Granger
Member of Congress

Randy Neugebauer
Member of Congress

Eric Cantor
Member of Congress

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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY
MANAGEMENT, REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Washington, DC 20240

OCT 28 2010

The Honorable Louie Gohmert
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Gohmert:

Thank you for your letter dated May 21, 2010, to Interior Secretary Salazar, cosigned by your colleagues, expressing your concern over development of oil and natural gas resources in the shallow waters of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). As the Director for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE), I have been asked to respond on the Secretary's behalf. A similar response is being sent to each signer of your letter.

Following the Deepwater Horizon incident, the Secretary suspended any authorized drilling of and ceased approval of pending and future applications for permits to drill wells using subsea or surface blowout preventers on a floating facility. On October 12, 2010, Secretary Salazar lifted the suspensions and announced that deepwater oil and gas drilling can resume, provided that operators certify compliance with all existing rules and requirements, including those that recently went into effect, and demonstrate the availability of adequate blowout containment resources.

I appreciate your concern over the economic impacts of the drilling suspensions; however, ensuring operational safety and incident response on the OCS is of critical importance. During the suspension, we conducted an active and necessary public outreach effort with industry, academic experts, and the public and gained valuable insight regarding the safety of deepwater drilling technology and procedures.

I recognize the importance of the contributions of the deepwater Gulf of Mexico to the domestic energy supply. The Department is committed to facilitating the resumption of drilling operations. While the former deepwater drilling ban has caused short-term economic hardships for the residents of the Gulf States, their long-term economic well-being, safety, and health have been better served by ensuring that drilling can proceed in a safe and environmentally protective manner.

Thank you for your interest in the OCS drilling program. If you have further questions, please contact me at (202) 208-3500 or Ms. Lyn Herdt, Chief, BOEMRE, Office of Congressional Affairs, at (202) 208-3502.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Bromwich
Director

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 7, 2010

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar,

We are writing to express our concerns with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) proposal to include a wilderness review of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) as part of the revision of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for ANWR.

While it is certainly appropriate to update the 22 year old plan, we strongly oppose any further wilderness reviews for ANWR. Alaska already leads the nation in wilderness designations and in the amount of land already protected. In fact, over 53% of the nation's designated Wilderness is located in Alaska at a staggering 58 million acres. Under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), 42% of ANWR has already been designated as Wilderness, including the eastern section of the coastal plain. In addition, 92% is off-limits to any development, and will continue to be regardless of what actions Congress takes regarding the coastal plain. As a result of these concessions, ANILCA contains provisions known as the "no more" clauses, which unmistakably explain that Alaska has given its share of land for federal conservation system units (CSU).

For example, section 101(d) states that the need for more parks, preserves, monuments, wild and scenic rivers, etc. in Alaska have been met. Section 1326(a) states that administrative withdrawals, such as the Antiquities Act, can no longer be used in Alaska unless, "Congress passes a joint resolution of approval within one year after the notice of such withdrawal has been submitted to Congress." And section 1326(b) states that federal agencies are not even allowed to study lands for consideration for set-asides unless Congress specifically authorizes the study.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledges that it does not have the authority to declare additional wilderness designations within the existing refuge,

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as those decisions are left up to Congress, however, they continue to pursue a wilderness study of the area anyways.

At the same time, the FWS states that it will not consider or respond to another section of the ANILCA, which calls for the development of the so-called 1002 area or the coastal plain. In its planning update for the Refuge, the FWS states that the future of the 1002 area of ANWR can only be resolved by Congress so "this is one issue the plan won't decide." Clearly, the FWS does not mind over-stepping its authority in one section of the law while hiding behind the law in another.

Since the plan revision clearly won't decide this issue, we strongly urge you to take the wilderness review off the table as part of the CCP revision. The FWS should not be wasting taxpayer dollars to study a wilderness designation which has time and again been denied by the U.S. Congress, when, in fact, the Congress has approved exploration in ANWR numerous times.

Sincerely,

Don Young

Kevin Lancy

Cathy McMorris Rodgers

Rob Bishop

Ron Paul

Rob Bishop

Steve Chabot

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OFFICE OF
ADMINISTRATIVE SECT

488120

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

JUL 21 2010

The Honorable Louie Gohmert
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Gohmert:

Thank you for your letter of June 7, 2010, signed with six of your House colleagues, regarding the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's revision of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan.

As you point out, new wilderness designations can only be made by Congress. However, wilderness reviews are an important part of the development and revision of refuge comprehensive conservation plans. The Fish and Wildlife Service Manual which is used to implement the Service's authorities and the Director's policies requires that a wilderness review be conducted as part of the development and revision of all comprehensive conservation plans for non-Alaska refuges. The Manual encapsulates the Service's wilderness policy which does not require, but does allow, such reviews during Alaska plan revision. The Department believes it is in the public interest to do a wilderness review for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge during the revision of the Plan.

Public involvement to identify the scope of the Plan revision ended on June 7, 2010. The Service received over 90,000 written comments and over 600 people attended public meetings held in Washington, DC and throughout Alaska. The comments received in writing and those received at the public meetings are being analyzed. Once the Service receives the scoping report and finishes its analysis on the public input, it will make a decision on the scope of the plan revision and the nature of wilderness review.

Thank you again for sharing with me your views on the Service's revision of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan. We may not always agree, but I am always interested in your thoughts on actions of the Department that affect your State.

Sincerely,

Ken Salazar

Ken Salazar

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 24, 2010

The Honorable Kenneth L. Salazar
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W., Room 6156
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

Thank you for meeting with Gulf Coast lawmakers on Capitol Hill to discuss the oil spill, urgent coastal protection efforts and the six month moratorium on drilling in the deep waters of the OCS.

It is our strong belief the moratorium – if allowed to continue much longer – will significantly damage our already weakened economy along the coast, cost tens of thousands of jobs, reduce local payrolls by nearly $2 billion and threaten the survival of many energy related small and mid-size businesses in the regions already hard hit by the spill.

While the deep water assessment is being completed, we propose an interim step to mitigate this collateral economic harm.

Today, there are 33 deepwater wells in the Gulf of Mexico under a drilling suspension due to the moratorium, but we believe a critical distinction has been overlooked. Different types of wells present a different level of risk. With the exception of the Deepwater Horizon, 14,000 deep water wells have been drilled around the world safely with the highest risk occurring during the initial drilling of exploration wells. Currently only five of the wells impacted by the Gulf moratorium are exploration wells, including the BP Macondo well. Twenty three are development wells and the remaining five are appraisal-development wells – both of these types of wells offer the reassurance of much smaller, minimal risk because the delineation and sidetrack drilling that accompanies these wells merely serve to define the parameters of the then-known reservoir.

As an interim step, we request the Department of the Interior clarify the moratorium to permit development and appraisal wells where reservoir parameters are known, and after drilling operators have been shown to comply with the Interior Department's new safety directive NTL 2010-N05. This modification will address your call for safe and secure drilling, protect an estimated 75 percent of the jobs that could be lost under the existing moratorium and help prevent future energy supply shortages in years 2011 and 2012.

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In addition, recognizing the United States has an important stake in ensuring these leases are fully developed in the future and that the extended drilling schedule of a rig may mean it cannot return to the Gulf for two to three years after it is moved to accommodate its next global customer, we urge you to consider indicating now that U.S. deepwater lease terms will be extended consistent with not just the length of the moratorium but the resulting delay in returning the rig to the OCS and its lease site. This will ensure that companies continue the major financial investments that permit successful energy production in the United States.

Mr. Secretary, very few energy related small businesses or their workers will be able to survive the six month moratorium as currently defined. We believe this interim solution has merit and we respectfully urge your consideration. Like you, we remain committed in our belief that energy exploration can be achieved responsibly and with the needs of our environment foremost in mind. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rep. Kevin Brady

Rep. Gene Green

Senator John Cornyn

Rep. Pete Olson

Rep. Henry Cuellar

Rep. Rodney Alexander

Rep. Chet Edwards

Rep. Louie Gohmert

Rep. Gregg Harper

Rep. Mike Conaway

Rep. Joe Barton

Rep. Sam Johnson

Rep. Lamar Smith

Rep. Ron Paul

Rep. John Carter

Rep. Pete Sessions

Rep. John Culberson

Rep. Mac Thornberry

Rep. Kay Granger

Rep. Trent Franks

Rep. Jeb Hensarling

Rep. Ralph Hall

Rep. Michael Burgess

Rep. Michael McCaul

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SECRETARY OF STATE
488693

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 24, 2010

The Honorable Kenneth L. Salazar
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W., Room 6156
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

Thank you for meeting with Gulf Coast lawmakers on Capitol Hill to discuss the oil spill, urgent coastal protection efforts and the six month moratorium on drilling in the deep waters of the OCS.

It is our strong belief the moratorium – if allowed to continue much longer – will significantly damage our already weakened economy along the coast, cost tens of thousands of jobs, reduce local payrolls by nearly $2 billion and threaten the survival of many energy related small and mid-size businesses in the regions already hard hit by the spill.

While the deep water assessment is being completed, we propose an interim step to mitigate this collateral economic harm.

Today, there are 33 deepwater wells in the Gulf of Mexico under a drilling suspension due to the moratorium, but we believe a critical distinction has been overlooked. Different types of wells present a different level of risk. With the exception of the Deepwater Horizon, 14,000 deep water wells have been drilled around the world safely with the highest risk occurring during the initial drilling of exploration wells. Currently only five of the wells impacted by the Gulf moratorium are exploration wells, including the BP Macondo well. Twenty three are development wells and the remaining five are appraisal-development wells – both of these types of wells offer the reassurance of much smaller, minimal risk because the delineation and sidetrack drilling that accompanies these wells merely serve to define the parameters of the then-known reservoir.

As an interim step, we request the Department of the Interior clarify the moratorium to permit development and appraisal wells where reservoir parameters are known, and after drilling operators have been shown to comply with the Interior Department's new safety directive NTL 2010-N05. This modification will address your call for safe and secure drilling, protect an estimated 75 percent of the jobs that could be lost under the existing moratorium and help prevent future energy supply shortages in years 2011 and 2012.

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In addition, recognizing the United States has an important stake in ensuring these leases are fully developed in the future and that the extended drilling schedule of a rig may mean it cannot return to the Gulf for two to three years after it is moved to accommodate its next global customer, we urge you to consider indicating now that U.S. deepwater lease terms will be extended consistent with not just the length of the moratorium but the resulting delay in returning the rig to the OCS and its lease site. This will ensure that companies continue the major financial investments that permit successful energy production in the United States.

Mr. Secretary, very few energy related small businesses or their workers will be able to survive the six month moratorium as currently defined. We believe this interim solution has merit and we respectfully urge your consideration. Like you, we remain committed in our belief that energy exploration can be achieved responsibly and with the needs of our environment foremost in mind. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rep. Kevin Brady

Rep. Gene Green

Senator John Cornyn

Rep. Pete Olson

Rep. Henry Cuellar

Rep. Rodney Alexander

Rep. Chet Edwards

Rep. Louie Gohmert

Rep. Gregg Harper

Rep. Mike Conaway

Rep. Joe Barton

Rep. Sam Johnson

Rep. Lamar Smith

Rep. Ron Paul

Rep. John Carter

Rep. Pete Sessions

Rep. John Culberson

Rep. Mac Thornberry

Rep. Kay Granger

Rep. Trent Franks

Rep. Jeb Hensarling

Rep. Ralph Hall

Rep. Michael Burgess

Rep. Michael McCaul

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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY
MANAGEMENT, REGULATION, AND ENFORCEMENT

Washington, DC 20240

OCT 27 2010

The Honorable Louie Gohmert
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Gohmert:

Thank you for your letter dated June 24, 2010, to Interior Secretary Salazar, cosigned by your colleagues, expressing your concerns regarding the moratorium of new offshore drilling permits, and requesting that development and appraisal wells where reservoir parameters are known and drilling operators comply with the Department of the Interior's new safety directive (NTL 2010-N05) be permitted. As the Director for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE), I have been asked to respond on his behalf. A similar response to your letter is being sent to each signer of your letter.

Following the Deepwater Horizon incident, the Secretary suspended any authorized drilling of and ceased approval of pending and future applications for permits to drill wells using subsea or surface blowout preventers on a floating facility. On October 12, 2010, Secretary Salazar lifted the suspensions and announced that deepwater oil and gas drilling can resume, provided that operators certify compliance with all existing rules and requirements, including those that recently went into effect, and demonstrate the availability of adequate blowout containment resources.

Again, thank you for your recommendation. I look forward to working with you to improve the safety of offshore oil and gas drilling, and to protect the valuable environmental resources of the OCS. If you have further questions, please contact me at (202) 208-3500 or Ms. Lyn Herdt, Chief, BOEMRE, Office of Congressional Affairs, at (202) 208-3502.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Bromwich
Director

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 30, 2010

Secretary Janet Napolitano
Department of Homeland Security
Nebraska Avenue Center, NW
Washington, DC 20528

Secretary Ken Salazar
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Napolitano and Secretary Salazar:

We are writing to you about a matter of urgency. As you are aware, despite the capping of the well, the situation in the Gulf of Mexico remains a significant and immediate threat. We are very concerned that the spreading oil will continue to pollute every state along the Gulf and, shortly other countries which share the Gulf waters with the United States. It is incumbent upon all of us to do everything we can to address this dire situation. Any practicable, viable, and demonstrated solution should be deployed to help clean-up this spreading oil tide.

We have had expert witnesses testify at recent hearings about available technologies which we feel can be an enormous asset in responding to the Gulf oil disaster. These technologies go far beyond what is currently used for oil cleanup, namely booming and skimming.

For example, one such technology, which originated in the Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory, is a compact and portable centrifuge device, which spins and separates oil and water at high speeds. The machine filters up to 200 gallons per minute with both oil and water outputs at 99.9 percent pure or better which can enable both the restoration of the water and recovery of the oil assets.

We urge you to review this and other technologies, set up demonstrations, and bring the successful ones to immediate service in the Gulf. Beyond assisting in the Gulf, we believe this and other technologies are valuable tools we must use going forward to ensure the safety of our waters and our way of life.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Markey

Edward Markey
Member of Congress

Dana Rohrabacher

Dana Rohrabacher
Member of Congress

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Brian Baird
Member of Congress

Cliff Stearns
Member of Congress

Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress

Michael McCaul
Member of Congress

Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress

Brian Bilbray
Member of Congress

Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress

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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY
MANAGEMENT, REGULATION, AND ENFORCEMENT

Washington, DC 20240

OCT 27 2010

The Honorable Louie Gohmert
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Gohmert:

Thank you for your letter dated July 30, 2010, to Interior Secretary Salazar and Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding available technologies that could be used to clean up the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. As the Director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE), I have been asked to respond on their behalf. A similar response will be sent to each signer of your letter.

Throughout the period when the efforts to respond to the Deepwater Horizon explosion and spill were at their height, thousands of people across the Nation and the world offered their ideas for stopping the flow of oil in the Gulf and cleaning it up. We very much appreciate the interest and commitment of the many people who offered their ideas and suggestions – and in some cases their own products and inventions.

While the spill has been contained and large quantities of oil from the spill have been collected, we are continuing to explore the important issues of spill containment and spill response so that the nation is better prepared in the event of another spill. We appreciate these contributions to that discussion.

Thank you for your continuing interest in the Gulf cleanup and your desire to participate in solutions to contain and clean up the oil spill. If you have any further questions, please contact me at (202) 208-3500 or Ms. Lyn Herdt, Chief, BOEMRE, Office of Congressional Affairs, at (202) 208-3502.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Bromwich
Director

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

513279

June 20, 2012

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
Mail Stop 2134 LM
1849 C St. NW.
Washington, DC 20240

RECEIVED
2012 JUN 20 PM 1:49
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Dear Secretary Salazar:

We are writing in regards to the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) proposed rule for "Oil and Gas; Well Stimulation, Including Hydraulic Fracturing, on Federal and Indian Lands" which was published in the Federal Register on May 11, 2012. We are concerned this proposal might have significant negative consequences on American energy security and job growth. Given what is at stake, we ask that the public comment period be extended to allow for additional consideration.

States have long and successful histories in regulating oil and natural gas operations, including hydraulic fracturing, well construction, and management of produced water. The federal government does not need to add additional regulations to a system that is working. Administration officials have testified before Congress saying that hydraulic fracturing has been used on over one million wells without a single report of groundwater contamination. Additionally, a nationwide rule fails to consider each state's unique geology, hydrology, and other varying conditions. Given the complicated and technical nature of this rule, and particularly how the rule might undermine existing state regulations, we believe additional time for review is warranted.

Furthermore, as you are aware, statistics have illustrated that oil and gas activities have already decreased significantly on federal lands compared to activity levels on state and private lands across the nation. We believe a major component of that trend has been the unnecessarily burdensome bureaucracy and related uncertainty that comes with operating under the federal regime. This operating environment creates a competitive disadvantage for resources on public and Indian lands, to the detriment of the taxpayer and to tribal owners who would prefer to see the greatest return on their assets. For western communities whose potential tax bases are restricted by large federal land holdings, and for tribal communities who are often the most underserved in the nation, the impact of lost or lessened economic activity is substantial. For the nation as a whole, struggling with crippling national debt, the undue reduction of potential federal revenues is absolutely irresponsible.

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As Members of Congress focused on job creation, energy security, and sound regulatory policies, we take our responsibility of reviewing the proposed rule very seriously. We must assure our constituents that any proposals which exacerbate the issues discussed above receive complete and thorough vetting of all the possible intended and unintended consequences. It is for these reasons that we write to request the comment period for the public, tribes, states, and affected stakeholders be extended 90 days.

Sincerely,

SE-03

Tim Huelskamp

TX-11

Glenn G. Thompson

Bill Johnson

Steve Scalise

Lynn Jenkins

Tim Griffin

Blaine Luetkemeyer

Raúl R. Labrador

Mike Coffman

Dan Burton

Tom Tauke

Ken Calvert

Shelley Moore Capito

Mike R. Pompeo

Bill Flores	Rob Bishop
Kevin McCarthy	Doug Lamborn
Cynthia Lummis	Jeff Landry
Cory Gardner	Kevin Brady
Paul Broun	Tom McClintock
Blake Farenthold	Pete Sessions
Tom Cole	Steve Pearce
Jeff Duncan	Tim Huelskamp
Rodney Alexander	Gus Bilirakis
Paul Gosar	James Lankford
Mac Thornberry	Don Young
Lamar Smith	Lynn Westmoreland
Louie Gohmert	Denny Rehberg
Steve Stivers	Jason Chaffetz
Francisco "Quico" Canseco	Charles Boustany
Renee Elmers	K. Michael Conaway
Todd Rokita	Glenn Thompson
Mark Amodei	Bill Johnson
Rick Berg	John Fleming
John Sullivan	Steve Scalise
Mick Mulvaney	Lynn Jenkins
Mike Coffman	Tim Griffin
Randy Neugebauer	Alan Nunnelee
Jeff Denham	Blaine Luetkemeyer
Dana Rohrabacher	Raúl Labrador
Steve Womack	Pete Olson
Tom Latham	Ken Calvert
Shelley Moore Capito	Scott Tipton
Kristi Noem	Mike Pompeo

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

JUN 26 2012

The Honorable Louie Gohmert
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gohmert:

Thank you for your letter of June 20, 2012, to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar requesting an extension of the comment period for the proposed rule to regulate hydraulic fracturing on public and Indian lands. It will become part of the administrative record for the proposed rule for consideration as this process proceeds. Secretary Salazar asked me to respond to your letter.

We recognize the importance of providing the public sufficient time to evaluate the proposed rule and its impacts, and have extended the public comment period to September 10, 2012. The *Federal Register* published our notice on June 26, 2012. This extension provides the public a total of 120 days to review and provide comments on this rule.

We will continue to work closely with Federal and state agencies, tribal representatives, stakeholders, and the public on this important issue. Together, we can facilitate development of oil and gas resources on public and Indian lands in an environmentally responsible manner. A similar reply was sent to the co-signers of your letter.

Sincerely,

Marcilynn A. Burke

Marcilynn A. Burke
Acting Assistant Secretary for
Land and Minerals Management

From the office of:

U.S. Representative Louie Gohmert

First Congressional District of Texas

510 Cannon House Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20515

Phone: (202) 225.3035

Fax: (202) 226.1230

Date: 10/11/07

To: Lori Williams, Executive Director, NISC

Number: 202-371-1751

From:

Number of Pages (Incl. Cover): 3

Notes:

Fax Transmittal

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 11, 2007

Interim Secretary Charles Conner
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Jamie L. Whitten Bldg., Rm. 200-A
12th and Jefferson Dr., SW
Washington DC, 20250

Secretary Carlos Gutierrez
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th & Constitution Ave., NW, Rm. 5854
Washington, DC 20230

Secretary Dirk Kempthorne
U.S. Department of the Interior
Rm. 6156, ms7229-MIB
1849 C St, NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Dear National Invasive Species Council Co-Chairs:

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of the American people. The purpose of this letter is to start a dialogue with all interested parties in the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) about addressing an invasive species that is destroying natural habitats all throughout the American south. *Giant salvinia* is a rapidly growing weed that was brought to the U.S from Brazil years ago. The weed grows in lakes and quickly forms canopies that prevent sunlight from entering the water - thus suffocating plant and animal life in the lake.

The problem of *giant salvinia* has become especially pronounced on Caddo Lake, which sits on the Texas-Louisiana border. Efforts have been made to deter the spread of the weed by erecting a plastic fence across the lake. Unfortunately, the fence cannot completely contain the weed, does nothing to eradicate the weed where it has already grown, and does little to contain the spores that attach to boats and are carried to neighboring lakes. Efforts at eradication have been made by introducing a beetle into the lake that feasts on *giant salvinia*, but the beetle does not thrive in the TX-LA climate, and has not proven to be a solution to the problem. Local citizens have generously offered their time to spray the weed with herbicide, but this too only temporarily holds off a growing crisis.

Giant salvinia has proven so overwhelming to the many communities it affects that it can only be effectively addressed on a national level with a cohesive strategy that attacks the weed by using all available resources and agencies. The NISC is perfectly suited to this task, and has the advisors and resources to study the problem and devise a national strategy for eradicating *giant salvinia*. As you know, Executive Order 13112 states that the NISC shall "provide national leadership regarding invasive species, and shall… see that the Federal agency activities concerning invasive species are coordinated, complementary, cost-efficient, and effective". Further, the NISC is charged with encouraging "planning and action at local, tribal, State, regional, and ecosystem-based

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levels...in cooperation with stakeholders and existing organizations addressing invasive species".

Executive Order 13112 instructs federal agencies in turn to use relevant programs and authorities to: "(i) prevent the introduction of invasive species; (ii) detect and respond rapidly to and control populations of such species in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner; (iii) monitor invasive species populations accurately and reliably; (iv) provide for restoration of native species and habitat conditions in ecosystems that have been invaded; (v) conduct research on invasive species and develop technologies to prevent introduction and provide for environmentally sound control of invasive species; and (vi) promote public education on invasive species and the means to address them".

We strongly encourage the NISC to begin taking steps to address the problem of *giant salvinia* on Caddo Lake and across America. Many habitats have already been devastated, and more will follow as the weed is carried to new bodies of water by various means. The weed has already spread to Cross Lake and Lake Bistineau in Louisiana and Toledo Bend Reservoir in Texas, and will inevitably spread to neighboring Sam Rayburn Reservoir in Texas if action is not taken soon.

Thank you for considering our views on this critical matter. We stand ready to assist the NISC with combating *giant salvinia* in any manner we are able. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Hon. Louie Gohmert

Hon. Jim McCrery

Cc: Lori Williams, Executive Director
National Invasive Species Council (NISC)
Department of the Interior
Office of the Secretary (OS/SIO/NISC)
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

NOV 20 2007

The Honorable Louie Gohmert
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20215

Dear Mr. Gohmert:

Thank you for your letter dated October 11, 2007, to Secretaries Kempthorne, Gutierrez, and Acting Secretary Conner concerning control of the invasive plant giant salvinia at Caddo Lake, Texas. I have been asked to respond on behalf of the three secretaries, who co-chair the National Invasive Species Council (NISC). Identical letter is sent to the Honorable Jim McCrery.

The NISC was established under Executive Order 13112 to, among other things, increase cooperation and collaboration among Federal agencies on invasive species issues. The NISC achieves this primarily through the publication of a national invasive species management plan and the work of its Invasive Species Advisory Committee. With this in mind, we welcome your call for greater collaboration and action in this matter.

The NISC, along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the U.S. Geological Survey (Survey), has been involved and has facilitated initial planning and rapid response assistance. The Service and others have assisted through a "Pulling Together Initiative" grant that funded the initial organization and planning for the Caddo Lake Giant Salvinia Task Force. The Survey has also been providing the task force with both scientific and technical support.

Ultimately, efforts to prevent, control, and otherwise provide rapid response actions for invasive species, as well as the provision of subsequent restoration efforts, are conducted by the appropriate local, State, or Federal agencies depending on jurisdiction, legal authority, and availability of resources. We must continually review and adjust our actions based on competing priorities and programs and increasingly limited funds. While we recognize the limited role that Federal agencies may generally play in State parks such as Caddo Lake, we commit to continue working closely with all interested parties, within our authorities and available resources, to ensure the highest level of cooperation and partnership in approaching this challenge.

Lastly, I note that efforts to manage giant salvinia might be eligible for limited funding under the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act (16 U.S.C. 4701 *et seq.*). Under this authority, States are encouraged to develop aquatic nuisance species management plans. While the State of Texas does not yet have an approved State Management Plan, once a plan is approved, limited funding to support its implementation

may be available through the Service's Division of Fisheries and Habitat Conservation. In addition, the attached U.S. Department of Agriculture 2007 Grants Workbook lists programs for matching and direct grants that may apply to control giant salvinia on State and private lands.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me at Paul_Hoffman@ios.doi.gov or (202) 208-1738.

Sincerely,

Paul Hoffman
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Performance
Accountability, and Human Resources

Enclosure

cc: Honorable Jim McCrery
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

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2007 JUL 23 PM 3:19

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

July 13, 2007

Secretary Dirk Kempthorne
United States Department of the Interior
1849 C St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Kempthorne:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the recent decision by the U.S. Department of the Interior to allow the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas to expand gambling at its Eagle Pass reservation. This decision not only infringes upon the right of our state's elected leaders to determine public policy as it relates to gambling in Texas, but it also directly conflicts with the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA).

Through IGRA, Congress has established a specific procedure that Native American Tribes wishing to conduct gaming must follow. The provisions of IGRA were intended to create a federal-state-tribe negotiation process that balances the rights of Native American tribes to conduct gaming activities on their reservations with a state's right to determine its own public policy through its elected leaders. The State of Texas has followed this process and has consistently rejected proposals to expand Native American casino gambling in our state.

As you know, the Attorney General of the State of Texas has filed a lawsuit seeking to enjoin the Interior Department from further use of "Secretarial Procedures" at the agency to approve expanded Native American gaming without adherence to the provisions of IGRA. This lawsuit is now on appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit and, based on the recent announcement regarding the Kickapoo Tribe, a decision may be imminent.

We respectfully ask that you reverse your decision to approve expanded casino gaming at the Kickapoo Reservation against the wishes of the elected leaders of the State of Texas and in conflict with the legislative intent of IGRA.

Sincerely,

Rep. Pete Sessions (TX-32) | Rep. Ted Poe (TX-02) | Rep. Louie Gohmert (TX-01)

Rep. Michael Burgess (TX-26) | Rep. Kenny Marchant (TX-24) | Rep. John Carter (TX-31)

Rep. Lamar Smith (TX-21) | Rep. Michael Conaway (TX-11) | Rep. Michael McCaul (TX-10)

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Rep. Sam Johnson (TX-03)

Rep. John Culberson (TX-07)

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

Honorable Louie Gohmert
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Gohmert:

Thank you for your letter of July 13, 2007, to Secretary Kempthorne, expressing your strong opposition to the recent preliminary scope of gaming determination for the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas. The Secretary has asked me to respond to your letter.

As you may know, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, recently issued a decision in litigation brought by the State of Texas challenging the Secretary's authority to promulgate Class III gaming procedures. The Department is in the process of evaluating the ruling and, in the interim, the Department will not be issuing procedures.

I hope that this letter addresses your concerns. Thank you for your interest in this important issue.

Sincerely,

Carl J. Artman
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs