

AVI

Natural Gas Policy Recommendations

Providing Low Income Energy Assistance

- Fully fund the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Release LIHEAP funds early

Developing Offshore Natural Gas and Oil Supplies

- Promptly conduct the OCS inventory required by the Energy Policy Act of 2005
- Lift the existing moratoria on offshore natural gas and oil exploration and development
- Provide states with expanded rights to develop energy resources off their shores, coupled with OCS revenue sharing that provides greater revenues to states that develop offshore natural gas and oil resources
- Adopt the most expansive 5 year lease sale program for 2007-2012 possible
- Streamline the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) consistency review process setting a 120 day deadline (from filing) for decisions on state appeals.

Developing Onshore Oil and Natural Gas Resources

- Open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)
- Expand leasing in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska
- Provide support for building the necessary infrastructure to deliver Alaskan gas to consumers in the lower 48 states.
- Removing process impediments by:
 - Allowing joint filing of Right of Way and drilling permits for federal lands to expedite the permitting process.
 - Expanding the use of categorical exclusions or sundry notices for minimal disturbance activities.
 - Implementing the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) 2003 Process Improvement Memoranda.
 - Conducting an independent review of agency practices and interpretation of criteria for determining site significance, including for historical/cultural resource reports and eliminating duplicate survey requirements.
 - Monitoring by BLM of lease stipulations and conditions of approval and removing them as appropriate.
- Providing adequate agency funding to:
 - Update resource management plans
 - Improve data sharing by federal and state land management agencies.
 - Ensure regulatory compliance through vigorous inspection and enforcement
 - Administer the National Environmental Protection Act effectively; and
 - Provide timely resolution of appeals and protests.

Additional measures that could be taken by BLM to expedite onshore production now, including:

- Exercising existing authority to allow year-round drilling and completions to proceed;
- Issuing permits immediately for all applications in areas where existing NEPA requirements have been met;
- Proposing new fast track, emergency response rules when there is a national energy emergency in order to significantly reduce permit review and approval times.
- Updating the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to enhance species recovery while streamlining review processes:
 - Use sound science and peer-reviewed data;
 - Evaluate the economic and social impacts of species designation;
 - Encourage the use of voluntary agreements; and
 - Recognize different levels of protection can be appropriate for different species.
- Improving the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA):
 - Eliminate duplicative environmental documentation in the NEPA process;
 - Strengthen the Environmental Assessment process to help reduce the need for Environmental Impact Statements;
 - Improve interagency consultation and cooperation;
 - Make the NEPA process more objective and timely through the use of best available scientific evidence and clear definition of information needed for decision-making; and
 - Enhance agency monitoring, inspection and enforcement.

Tapping into Global Supplies through Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)

- Process LNG project permit applications within one year:
 - Coordinate and streamline permitting – LNG project sponsors face multiple, often-competing state and local reviews, as well as federal review, that result in permit delays. Setting clear review deadlines and conducting concurrent reviews also can streamline the process.
 - Provide adequate regulatory agency funding – Additional funding and staff will be needed to promptly process increased applications for LNG terminals and to administer regulatory programs for these terminals once they are operational.
- Conduct public education programs on the safety and security of LNG operations.

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