

Mahoney Demands Big Oil Use Existing Leases to Increase Production

(WASHINGTON, D.C.)-At a press conference today, Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) announced that he has co-sponsored The Responsible Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act of 2008, which will help lower gas prices by demanding that oil companies utilize the 68 million acres of federal land onshore and offshore that they currently lease, but are not in production. Congressman Mahoney also stated his opposition to the President's proposal to end the moratorium on offshore oil drilling.

Opposes President's Proposal to End Offshore Drilling Moratorium

(June 19, 2008)

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"The President's proposals to drill off the coast of Florida are shortsighted and irresponsible. Not only could drilling imperil our \$65-billion dollar tourist industry, there is insufficient oil there to meaningfully address demand. We know that the entire supply in the Gulf would fill U.S. demand for only about 10 months," said Congressman Mahoney. "Before we put Florida's economy and families at risk, I want to know why the major oil companies have yet to drill on more than 68 million acres of Federal lands they already under lease. I want to know why big oil companies have yet to drill in the 39 million acres in the Gulf of Mexico already available to them. I want to know why big oil companies should continue to get \$14 billion in subsidies, when America needs to invest in alternative energy."

Currently, oil companies are not producing oil or gas on the nearly 68 million acres of federal land already under their control. Offshore, big oil is producing on only about 20 percent of the acres they hold, while onshore, companies are producing on less than 30 percent of the acres they hold. These unused areas could produce an additional 4.8 million barrels of oil and 44.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas each day, nearly double current domestic oil production.

"It is clear that drilling is not the answer as we have increased drilling by 66% since 2000 yet gas prices have skyrocketed by 220% during that same period. With nearly 68 million acres of onshore and offshore public land already leased for oil and gas drilling but untouched by the energy companies who hold those leases, it's time for President Bush and oil companies to stop making the false claim that the US is not making enough land available for energy production," said Congressman Mahoney. "Florida families, who are spending up to 20% of their take-home pay on gas, deserve real solutions not self-serving propaganda. Today is the first of many steps that Congress will take to ensure that high prices don't rob Floridians of their American Dream."

The Responsible

Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act of 2008 employs a "use it or lose it" tactic that will compel oil and gas companies to either produce or give up the federal onshore and offshore leases they are stockpiling by barring the companies from obtaining any more leases unless they can demonstrate that they are producing oil and gas, or are diligently developing the leases they already hold.

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