



Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Public Hearing Talking Points: Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Geological & Geophysical Exploration on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf

Background

In March 2010, President Obama announced his support for increased access to offshore oil & natural gas. Soon thereafter, the Department of the Interior issued a proposal to seek public comments on the environmental impact of allowing companies to conduct seismic studies of the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). However, following the *Deepwater Horizon* tragedy in the Gulf of Mexico in April 2010, the federal government suspended exploration and leasing in the Atlantic and the development of a programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) was put on hold.

Now, nearly two years later, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has issued a draft PEIS and is seeking input from coastal communities along the Delaware-to-Florida planning area. Seismic studies are an important first step in considering offshore energy exploration of the Atlantic OCS and will help determine available oil and natural gas resources. In order to move forward with offshore production in the Atlantic, we need updated resource assessments in order to drive policymaker and industry interest in reestablishing lease sales in the Atlantic.

Talking Points

Economic Benefits:

- According to a 2011 Woods Mackenzie study, oil and gas development in the Atlantic OCS could generate up to 140,000 jobs and \$14 billion in government revenue annually.
- The U.S. oil and gas industry supports over nine million American jobs – both directly and indirectly – and generates nearly \$1 trillion in economic activity every year. If access to areas currently off-limits to production were granted, an additional \$1.7 trillion in government revenues (from bonus bids, royalties and other taxes) could be generated.

Energy Demand:

- In 2010, the United States consumed 19.1 million barrels of petroleum products a day, making the U.S. the world's largest petroleum consumer. The United States consumes more energy from petroleum than from any other energy source.
- Future Atlantic energy exploration and production could add significant domestic supplies to help offset growing demand. It is important that we allow access now because it will take more than a decade to find the energy and deliver it to consumers. Responsible energy development in the Atlantic will benefit the Southeast and the nation.



Political Support

- The Commonwealth of Virginia’s bipartisan leadership – including Senators Webb and Warner and Governor McDonnell – has expressed a desire to move forward with offshore production in Virginia. Similarly, South Carolina Governor Haley has indicated her support for exploring the energy potential off her state’s coast.
- Since 2009, CEA has helped send more than 50,000 letters from citizens in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia to Washington, conveying their support for offshore energy development in the Atlantic.

To Engage:

Make sure to submit your comments to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management by **May 30th**. Please visit [CEA’s website](#) to take action today.

If you live on the East Coast and are able to attend a public hearing on the matter, please visit BOEM’s [website](#) for more information. Meetings are scheduled April 16th through April 27th along the East Coast: Jacksonville, FL; Savannah, GA; Charleston, SC; Norfolk, VA; Annapolis, MD; Wilmington, NC; Wilmington, DE; and Atlantic City, NJ.