



## OFFICES OF THE GOVERNORS

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WASHINGTON

September 12, 2008

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne  
Secretary of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary,

As the Governors of California, Oregon and Washington, we write to offer comments on the Preparation of the Five-Year Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program: 2010-2015. Thank you for the opportunity to do so.

As you may be aware, on September 18, 2006, our three states entered into a historic partnership to address critical ocean and coastal protection and management issues. One of our first actions in carrying out this agreement was to write to President Bush and members of Congress on September 29, 2006, stating our opposition to any action by the federal government that would weaken the national oil and gas leasing moratorium off the West Coast. We remain steadfast in this position to protect the waters, ecosystem and marine life off our shores and to do so into perpetuity. In short, weakening current protections is unacceptable.

On July 29, 2008, we released a landmark action plan to implement the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health. Among other things, the action plan further demonstrates our commitment to develop environmentally sustainable renewable energy sources and to combat the effects of climate change on our oceans and coasts, instead of increasing our dependence on fossil fuels. The action plan also directly states our ongoing opposition to new oil and gas leasing and related activities in the waters off our shores. Identifying renewable and alternative energy sources, taking steps to increase energy efficiency and conservation, and reducing greenhouse gases should be the foundation of an energy strategy for our nation. Our states have already pursued many of these activities individually and now regionally through the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health and the Western Climate Initiative. These actions are critical to protecting our quality of life now and for future generations.

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As Governors, we are concerned about rising gasoline prices, but believe that drilling in these protected waters is not the answer. Findings in the Energy Information Administration's 2007 Annual Energy Outlook report are compelling. The federal government's own analysis states that if the current moratorium were to end in 2012 (when the current Five-Year Plan expires), the extracted oil and gas would not have a measurable impact on production or prices before 2030. The analysis also concludes that the impact on average wellhead prices from lifting the moratorium are expected to be insignificant, because the amount of new production would be inconsequential at the international level – where these prices are set.

We urge the federal government to look for realistic short- and long-term solutions to our energy problems, instead of pursuing a course that would be devastating to the environment and would not provide the fundamental economic relief that consumers seek. We would be happy to work with you to move forward with positive and workable solutions.

Sincerely,



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor of California



Theodore R. Kulongoski  
Governor of Oregon



Christine O. Gregoire  
Governor of Washington

cc: Ms. Renee Orr, 5-Year Program Manager, Minerals Management Service  
Members of the California Congressional Delegation  
Members of the Oregon Congressional Delegation  
Members of the Washington Congressional Delegation