

CHARLIE MELANCON
3RD DISTRICT, LOUISIANA

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
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COMMITTEE ON
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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June 8, 2010

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

Dear Secretary Salazar,

The recent Notice to Lessees No. 2010-N04 directs operators to "cease drilling all new deepwater wells, including any wellbore sidetracks and bypasses; prohibits you from spudding any new deepwater wells" for a 6-month period. This moratorium on deepwater drilling stands to bear significant and harmful effects on the economy of the Gulf Coast - already reeling from the oil leak.

While we agree that the safety of deep water operations is paramount, we have grave concerns regarding the effects that a moratorium would have on our economy and our goal to become energy independent. According to the Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association the federally ordered drilling suspension will idle approximately 33 deepwater mobile offshore drilling units, each employing 180-280 workers. In addition, each of these jobs supports four other industry employees. This represents 900-1,400 jobs lost per rig, or a total of 29,700-46,200 jobs total. LMOGA puts the direct wages lost as high as \$330 million per month.

Given the probable impact this policy proposal on the Gulf Coast we request that you meet with members of Congress from affected districts to discuss options on how to move forward with a safe environment for drilling without harming our economies.

Sincerely,

John Fleming

Carl J. Cas

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