



# Committee on Natural Resources

Rep. Nick J. Rahall, II - Chairman

1324 Longworth House Office Building - Washington DC, 20515 - <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>

## **The Consolidated Land, Energy, and Aquatic Resources Act of 2009 (H.R. 3534)**

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The Consolidated Land, Energy, and Aquatic Resources (CLEAR) Act of 2009 would make several significant changes to current law in order to create greater efficiencies, transparency, and accountability in the development of federal energy resources.

The CLEAR Act would:

### ***Reorganize and consolidate energy leasing programs for greater efficiency and effectiveness***

- Consolidate the federal energy and mineral leasing programs within one bureau in the Department of the Interior (DOI) to provide greater efficiencies by combining lease sales, inspection, enforcement and revenue collection into a single entity.
- Establish the Office of Federal Energy and Minerals Leasing – combining the oil and gas, wind, wave and solar programs currently located in the Minerals Management Service (MMS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM).
- Move the audit and compliance functions of MMS to DOI's Office of the Inspector General, in order to provide more independence for the employees working on those crucial activities.

### ***Improve the Federal Onshore Energy Leasing Program***

- Require federal oil and gas lessees to diligently develop their leases.
- Impose "best management practices" on oil and gas lessees to ensure they operate in an environmentally sustainable manner.
- Raise onshore oil and gas rental rates for the first time since the 1980's.
- Assess a production incentive fee on existing leases that are not producing oil or gas.
- Establish a competitive wind and solar leasing program for federal lands, while allowing non-competitive leases for research and testing.
- Establish a leasing program for uranium, updating the rules for uranium mining that have been in place since 1872.

### ***Improve the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Collection Program***

- End the Royalty-In-Kind program, which was the source of a major scandal regarding overly-cozy relationships between private industry and government regulators.

- Eliminate the practice of paying interest to oil and gas companies when they overpay royalties by accident.
- Enhance the ability of the government to go after oil and gas lessees that chronically or intentionally shortchange the American people of their rightful royalties.
- Repeal unnecessary royalty relief provisions.

***Create a robust planning process for energy development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS)***

- Establish regional ocean councils for the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and Alaska regions, which would prepare marine spatial strategic plans to guide OCS energy development.
- Ensure that existing energy activities on the OCS are not delayed while the strategic plans are being developed.
- Direct 10% of OCS revenues into a new Ocean Resources Conservation and Assistance (ORCA) Fund, which would be used to protect, maintain, and restore ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes ecosystems

***Fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)***

- Provide funding to states, counties, towns, tribal governments, and other entities across the country to assist in preserving, protecting, and developing parks, trails, and other outdoor spaces and facilities, to enable and encourage public recreation and job creation.
- Assist large major restoration efforts in Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, the Everglades, the Great Lakes, and other important aquatic systems.