



## **Industrial Energy Consumers of America**

*The Voice of the Industrial Energy Consumers*

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October 6, 2022

Ms. Kelly Hammerle  
Chief, National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program Development and Coordination  
Branch, Leasing Division  
Office of Strategic Resources, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (VAM-LD)  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
45600 Woodland Road  
Sterling, VA 20166-9216

***Re: Notice of Availability of the 2023-2028 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Proposed Program and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, Docket No. BOEM-2022-0031***

We strongly encourage the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) to unleash energy production from federal lands and waters. Geopolitical events clearly demonstrate that domestic production is critically important for both U.S. economic and national security and for our allies and is sound anti-inflation policy.

On October 5, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) announced that they would reduce oil production by 2 million barrels per day. The announcement from OPEC confirms why the U.S. must be energy independent and not dependent upon foreign countries for supply of energy.

One hundred percent of our member companies are from the manufacturing sector and are large consumers of natural gas as a fuel and feedstock inputs to produce value-added products that our nation and defense industries rely. The manufacturing sector consumes 27 percent of U.S. production of natural gas, plus 100 percent of its natural gas feedstock. Natural gas is also used to produce nearly 40 percent of our nation's power. These manufacturers utilize these energy resources much more efficiently than other countries with which we suffer a massive manufacturing goods trade imbalance, now to the tune of \$1 trillion per year.

Manufacturers cannot substitute renewable electricity for natural gas in order to operate. Manufacturing equipment that is designed for the use of natural gas cannot operate on electricity. Plus, a Btu of energy from electricity is much more expensive than a Btu of natural gas. We also operate 24/7 and renewable energy is not reliable.

Where possible, we must increase access to domestic energy resources so that we are not import-dependent on countries like Russia.

Therefore, we urge the DOI to urgently take action to unleash domestic energy production. A forward-looking DOI policy must continue to include opportunities to explore and develop onshore and offshore natural gas and oil resource leasing in the lower 48 and Alaska. The Gulf of Mexico is the mainstay of U.S. oil and natural gas production. The DOI should prioritize this leasing program above other leasing programs. The U.S. needs a reliable source of energy domestically.

Increased domestic production of these resources could put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work, make us more energy secure, and increase needed revenue for the government. But the U.S. will not receive these benefits unless the federal government supports pro-development energy policies. Increased production supports reliability and lower energy prices that are needed by the manufacturing sector to compete globally, invest domestically, and create jobs.

Sincerely,

Paul Cicio

*Paul Cicio*

President & CEO

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*The Industrial Energy Consumers of America is a nonpartisan association of leading manufacturing companies with \$1.1 trillion in annual sales, over 11,700 facilities nationwide, and with more than 1.8 million employees worldwide. IECA membership represents a diverse set of industries including: chemicals, plastics, steel, iron ore, aluminum, paper, food processing, fertilizer, insulation, glass, industrial gases, pharmaceutical, building products, automotive, brewing, independent oil refining, and cement.*