



**Rodney Alexander** / Louisiana's 5th District  
UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN

**THOUGHTS FROM CAPITOL HILL**  
July 15, 2008

**Contact: Jenni Terry**  
202/225-8490

## **Democratic Leadership Must Allow a Vote on Domestic Drilling**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – While many of my colleagues and I have been pushing for solutions to the nation's energy crisis, including increasing the U.S. oil production in areas such as the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Democratic leaders have consistently stuck to the old routine – blaming the Administration.

I don't think they can get by on that strategy much longer though, considering the President's recent decision to lift the executive moratorium on drilling for oil and natural gas on the OCS. His move put the full responsibility of action squarely on the Democrats' shoulders.

The executive ban was first issued in 1990, but it is the moratorium Congress enacted in 1982 that must be lifted in order to expand drilling on the OCS.

Experts say the untapped OCS regions could yield 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 86 billion barrels of oil, which could provide a decade's worth of oil for the United States.

Yet, this option is one that majority leadership has repeatedly refused to even consider.

Despite support from Republicans and some moderate Democrats for expanding drilling in OCS, leadership has held no hearings and even shut down the budget process in order to deny Republicans the opportunity to force a vote on domestic drilling.

It is as though leadership is content to continue purchasing America's oil from the Middle East.

Throughout this gas crisis, many 5th District residents have asked why our country does not better utilize our own resources. They wonder why we would continue to depend on foreign sources of energy when we have the potential to be more self-sufficient.

The answer should be clear now. The only thing standing in our way from striking out and claiming a more energy independent future is the Democratic leadership in Congress.

**U.S. Rep. Rodney Alexander, R-Quitman, represents the 5th Congressional District and serves on the House Appropriations Committee and the House Budget Committee. He can be reached at the Monroe District Office (318-322-3500), the Alexandria District Office (318-445-0818) or Washington, D.C. (202-225-8490.) Visit Alexander's Web site at [www.house.gov/alexander](http://www.house.gov/alexander) or write him at 316 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.**

###