



February 14, 2013

Ms. Sally Jewell
Interior Secretary Designate
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 S. St. NW, MS 7729
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Jewell:

Congratulations on your nomination to become the next Secretary of the Interior. We are writing to you regarding the status of off-shore energy policy, especially as it impacts energy exploration and production on the outer continental shelf (OCS). As governors, we strive to pursue policies that help create jobs and make energy more affordable while protecting our states' natural resources.

Over the past several years, a number of governors have expressed an interest in reforming off-shore energy policy so that states can safely and prudently take advantage of abundant off-shore resources. During your nomination hearings, we will be listening intently to your answers regarding energy exploration off the coasts of our states and hope you will signal your willingness to revise the Administration's current policy to one that is committed to safely harnessing our coast's vast natural resources.

Additionally, we implore you to consider the policy recommendations outlined by the Republican Governors Public Policy Committee in 2012, when it released "An Energy Blueprint for America." Among the many policy recommendations: responsible development of our offshore resources; state empowerment to make off-shore explorations restrictions specific to local considerations; and revenue-sharing measures for all off-shore energy projects.

We were heartened to see the recent release of Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Lisa Murkowski's (R-AK) "Energy 20/20" blueprint that recommends expanding OCS leasing to the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and parts of the Atlantic OCS including Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina. We applaud this proposal and sincerely hope that

the Administration under your guidance can work with us and our Congressional colleagues to enact these commonsense measures.

These proposals build on past legislative action from the 112th Congress, including the bipartisan Offshore Petroleum Expansion Now Act (OPEN Act) of 2012, sponsored by Senator Mark Warner (D-VA) and former Senator Jim Webb (D-VA), and a suite of bills passed by the House of Representatives.

It's estimated that energy production from the Atlantic OCS could create more than 140,000 new jobs within the next 20 years, and we hope you will ensure that the Administration is a partner with the states on this issue.

We look forward to engaging in a conversation with you about framing a new off-shore energy policy that encourages economic growth and job creation. Governors understand the importance of regulatory oversight, environmental protection, and public health; after all, it is an essential part of our mission and duty to our citizens. Let us work together to continue encouraging the energy revolution that will play a pivotal role in our country's economic and energy security for decades to come.

Sincerely,



Governor Pat McCrory
North Carolina



Governor Nikki Haley
South Carolina



Governor Robert F. McDonnell
Virginia

cc: The Honorable Harry Reid
The Honorable Mitch McConnell
The Honorable John Boehner
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable Ron Wyden
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
The Honorable Doc Hastings
The Honorable Edward Markey