

Union Calendar No. 333

118TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 5616

[Report No. 118-405]

To require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct certain offshore lease sales.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana (for himself, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. ELLZEY, and Mr. EZELL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

MARCH 5, 2024

Additional sponsors: Mr. HUNT and Mr. CARL

MARCH 5, 2024

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italie*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on September 21, 2023]

A BILL

To require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct certain
offshore lease sales.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Bringing Reliable In-*
5 *vestment into Domestic Gulf Energy Production Act of*
6 *2023” or the “BRIDGE Production Act of 2023”.*

7 **SEC. 2. OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS LEASE SALES.**

8 (a) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

9 (1) *OFFSHORE LEASE SALE.—The term “offshore*
10 *lease sale” means an oil and gas lease sale—*

11 (A) *that is held by the Secretary in accord-*
12 *ance with the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act*
13 *(43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.), notwithstanding the re-*
14 *quirements of section 18 of that Act (43 U.S.C.*
15 *1344);*

16 (B) *that, with respect to lease sales in the*
17 *Gulf of Mexico region, offers the same lease form,*
18 *lease terms, economic conditions, and stipula-*
19 *tions as contained in the final notice of sale enti-*
20 *tled “Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf Oil*
21 *and Gas Lease Sale 257” (86 Fed. Reg. 54728*
22 *(October 4, 2021)); and*

23 (C) *that, if any acceptable bids have been*
24 *received for any tract offered in the lease sale, re-*
25 *sults in the issuance of leases within 90 days of*

1 *the sale to the highest bids on the tracts offered,*
2 *subject to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Manage-*
3 *ment “Summary of Procedures for Determining*
4 *Bid Adequacy at Offshore Oil and Gas Lease*
5 *Sales Effective March 2016, with Central Gulf of*
6 *Mexico Sale 241 and Eastern Gulf of Mexico*
7 *Sale 226”.*

8 (2) *SECRETARY.*—*The term “Secretary” means*
9 *the Secretary of the Interior.*

10 (b) *WAIVER.*—*The Secretary may waive any other re-*
11 *quirements under section 18 of the Outer Continental Shelf*
12 *Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1344) that would delay final ap-*
13 *proval of an offshore lease sale under subsection (c).*

14 (c) *REQUIREMENT.*—*Notwithstanding section 18 of the*
15 *Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1344), the*
16 *Secretary shall—*

17 (1) *conduct not fewer than 13 offshore lease sales*
18 *during the 5-year period beginning on the date of en-*
19 *actment of this Act, including 10 lease sales in the*
20 *Gulf of Mexico region and 3 lease sales in the Cook*
21 *Inlet Planning Area, notwithstanding lease sales*
22 *which are held under the 2024–2029 Proposed Final*
23 *Program (88 Fed. Reg. 67798 (October 2, 2023)); and*

24 (2) *ensure that the 2017–2022 Outer Continental*
25 *Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program Final Pro-*

1 *grammatic Environmental Impact Statement and*
2 *Record of Decision shall apply to lease sales con-*
3 *ducted under this subsection and shall be sufficient*
4 *for purposes of complying with the National Environ-*
5 *mental Policy Act for offshore lease sales conducted*
6 *under this subsection to the extent it does not conflict*
7 *with this Act.*

8 *(d) TIMING.—*

9 *(1) GULF OF MEXICO REGION.—In conducting*
10 *the offshore lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico region re-*
11 *quired under subsection (c), the Secretary shall con-*
12 *duct an offshore lease sale not later than—*

13 *(A) March 31, 2024;*

14 *(B) August 31, 2024;*

15 *(C) March 31, 2025;*

16 *(D) August 31, 2025;*

17 *(E) March 31, 2026;*

18 *(F) August 31, 2026;*

19 *(G) March 31, 2027;*

20 *(H) August 31, 2027;*

21 *(I) March 31, 2028; and*

22 *(J) August 31, 2028.*

23 *(2) COOK INLET PLANNING AREA.—In con-*
24 *ducting the offshore lease sales in the Cook Inlet Plan-*

1 *ning Area required under subsection (c), the Secretary*
2 *shall conduct an offshore lease sale not later than—*

3 *(A) August 31, 2025;*

4 *(B) March 31, 2027; and*

5 *(C) August 31, 2028.*

6 *(e) AREA OFFERED FOR LEASE.—*

7 *(1) ACREAGE.—The Secretary shall offer not*
8 *fewer than 80,000,000 acres for each offshore lease*
9 *sale conducted under subsection (c) for offshore lease*
10 *sales in the Gulf of Mexico Region. The Secretary*
11 *shall offer not fewer than 1,000,000 acres for each re-*
12 *gion wide lease sale conducted under subsection (c) in*
13 *the Cook Inlet Planning Area.*

14 *(2) LOCATION.—An offshore lease sale conducted*
15 *under subsection (c)—*

16 *(A) in the Gulf of Mexico region shall offer*
17 *the areas identified in Figure S–1 of the 2017–*
18 *2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leas-*
19 *ing Proposed Final Program published on No-*
20 *vember 18, 2016, by the Bureau of Ocean Energy*
21 *Management (as announced in the notice of*
22 *availability of the Bureau of Ocean Energy*
23 *Management entitled “Notice of Availability of*
24 *the 2017–2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and*

1 *Gas Leasing Proposed Final Program*” (81 Fed.
2 *Reg. 84612 (November 23, 2016))*); and

3 (B) *in the Cook Inlet Planning Area shall*
4 *offer the areas identified in Figure S–2 of the*
5 *2017–2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas*
6 *Leasing Proposed Final Program published on*
7 *November 18, 2016, by the Bureau of Ocean En-*
8 *ergy Management (as announced in the notice of*
9 *availability of the Bureau of Ocean Energy*
10 *Management entitled “Notice of Availability of*
11 *the 2017–2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and*
12 *Gas Leasing Proposed Final Program*” (81 Fed.
13 *Reg. 84612 (November 23, 2016))*).

14 (f) *EFFECT OF LITIGATION.*—

15 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*A civil action challenging an*
16 *offshore lease sale conducted under this section shall*
17 *not—*

18 (A) *affect the validity of any lease issued*
19 *under such an offshore lease sale; and*

20 (B) *except as provided in paragraph (3)(B),*
21 *cause a delay in the timelines for the consider-*
22 *ation of any exploration plan, development plan,*
23 *development operations coordination document,*
24 *applications for permit to drill, or other applica-*
25 *tion for a Federal agency authorization or ap-*

1 *proval for activities on a lease issued under such*
2 *an offshore lease sale.*

3 (2) *REMAND; PROCESSING OF APPROVALS AND*
4 *APPLICATIONS.—If, in a civil action described in*
5 *paragraph (1), a court finds that the offshore lease*
6 *sale was not carried out in compliance with Federal*
7 *law—*

8 (A) *the court shall not—*

9 (i) *set aside, vacate, or enjoin the off-*
10 *shore lease sale;*

11 (ii) *set aside, vacate, or enjoin the*
12 *leases issued pursuant to the offshore lease*
13 *sale; or*

14 (iii) *enjoin the Secretary from issuing*
15 *leases to the highest bidders in the chal-*
16 *lenged offshore lease sale;*

17 (B) *the court shall remand the matter to the*
18 *Secretary and require the Secretary to correct*
19 *the noncompliance; and*

20 (C) *the Secretary shall continue to process*
21 *all exploration plans, development plans, devel-*
22 *opment operations coordination documents, ap-*
23 *plications for a permit to drill, and other appli-*
24 *cations for a Federal agency authorization or*
25 *other approval for activities requested under any*

1 *lease issued under the challenged offshore lease*
2 *sale in accordance with the Outer Continental*
3 *Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.).*

4 (3) *NOTICE.*—

5 (A) *IN GENERAL.*—*Not later than 10 days*
6 *after the date on which a civil action described*
7 *in paragraph (1) is served on the United States,*
8 *the Secretary shall notify the holder of any lease*
9 *issued, or apparent high bidder if the lease has*
10 *not yet been issued, under the offshore lease sale*
11 *that is the subject of the civil action of the filing*
12 *of the civil action.*

13 (B) *TIMELINE.*—*Not later than 90 days*
14 *after the date of receipt of a notice under sub-*
15 *paragraph (A), the holder of the lease may file*
16 *with the Secretary, and the Secretary may ap-*
17 *prove, a request to pause the timeline with re-*
18 *spect to the term of the lease during any period*
19 *in which the civil action is pending.*

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