



**Barry Russell**  
President & CEO

April 5, 2012

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

The Independent Petroleum Association of America (IPAA) is encouraged by your announcement on April 3rd that the Department of the Interior (DOI) plans to accelerate drilling permits and leases on federal lands. This common sense action is welcomed and long overdue.

IPAA remains dedicated to working with DOI to support and promote the safe and responsible development of our nation's oil and natural gas resources. Therefore, the leadership of IPAA requests a meeting with you and your senior staff to discuss ways we could take the lessons of the robust activity in North Dakota and see if there are opportunities to apply the same rules to federal lands throughout the Intermountain West.

While we fully support the streamlined regulatory framework that you unveiled in North Dakota, we believe much more should and must be done to strengthen America's energy security. By seeing firsthand the economic benefits increased oil and natural gas production has brought to North Dakota and the entire region, we hope you will agree about the potential that can be unleashed if America's oil and natural gas industry is allowed to operate efficiently and without increased bureaucracy and red-tape. We hope the proposed changes you announced will help replicate the efficient framework that currently exists on state and private lands in North Dakota.

We encourage you to expedite implementation of the new automated tracking and permitting system before the announced date of May 2013. Although IPAA realizes that making changes to the current antiquated system may take some time, we hope your agency could make these changes in less than a year. Reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens and eliminating inefficiencies in government bureaucracy was a key part of President Obama's announcement last month regarding the need to implement smarter, cost-justified regulations. We can think of no better area to start the initiative than in efforts to increase American oil and natural gas production and hope it will not take over a year to make these important changes.

IPAA remains dedicated to working with DOI to support and promote the safe and responsible development of our nation's oil and natural gas resources. The leadership of IPAA requests a meeting with you and your senior staff to discuss ways we could take the lessons of the robust activity in North Dakota and see if there are opportunities to apply the same rules to federal lands throughout the Intermountain West. We look forward to meeting with you at your earliest possible convenience.

Sincerely,

Barry Russell  
President & CEO  
Independent Petroleum Association of America