



November 20, 2013

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairman
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Vitter
Ranking Member
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nick Rahall
Ranking Member
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Boxer and Shuster and Ranking Members Vitter and Rahall:

As trade associations representing offshore energy production, we have a keen interest in ensuring that there is a stable, predictable regulatory environment that will allow our companies the certainty needed to make long-term investments in offshore exploration and production activities. The Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act provides the statutory authority for energy development within the Exclusive Economic Zone while the Coastal Zone Management Act provides the statutory authority for the management of coastal areas. With these and other federal laws, the U.S. already has in place the proper regulatory tools to manage ocean resources while balancing the needs of economic development and environmental conservation. As such, we are opposed to Title XII of S. 601, which establishes a National Endowment for the Oceans as it creates additional and unnecessary authority over ocean resources.

Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) is defined by the Administration as “identifying areas most suitable for various types or classes of activities” in the ocean and coastal areas, as identified by regional planning bodies. We continue to be concerned with the National Ocean Policy’s impact on our industry, especially the lack of adequate stakeholder representation on the regional planning bodies. While the Executive Order asserts that regional plans are meant to be flexible and built upon existing plans, we believe they will be unnecessary, duplicative, burdensome, and limit our ability to operate in certain areas.

We oppose the establishment of a National Endowment for the Oceans given the broad range of potential uses of this funding and the possibility that these funds could be used to limit multiple uses of the ocean. Of particular concern to us are the provisions that will allow for funding of activities to implement CMSP through regional planning bodies and to acquire coastal property and put it off limits to future development. Given the lack of current data regarding potential energy resources in certain Outer Continental Shelf areas, actions that serve to limit future energy development opportunities could negatively impact the offshore energy industry and in turn the nation’s economic growth potential and energy security. As such, we ask that the National Endowment for the Oceans provision be removed from the conference report.

Thank you for your time and attention to these important issues.

Sincerely,

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Khary Cauthen
API

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Vorberger', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeff Vorberger
NOIA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Naatz', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dan Naatz
IPAA

Cc: House/Senate conferees