

## Union Calendar No. 333

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 5616

[Report No. 118-405]

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

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### 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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