

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 11, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
United States House of Representatives

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Leader McCarthy,

We write to respectfully request that the conference preserve Section 71106, “Leasing on the Outer Continental Shelf,” of the *America COMPETES Act of 2022* during the upcoming bicameral conference negotiations for the *Bipartisan Innovation Act*. This provision will lift the arbitrary and overly-broad ban on new leases for offshore wind in the South Atlantic and Eastern Gulf of Mexico, a crucial step towards improving America’s energy independence and global competitiveness.

In September 2020, President Trump withdrew areas off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida from new offshore oil and gas leasing in a pair of memoranda for the Secretary of the Interior dated September 8 and September 25, 2020.¹ Due to the broad and imprecise language of these memoranda, the 10-year moratorium also applies to offshore wind. This offshore wind moratorium imperils a critical new wave of offshore wind energy development, threatens tens of thousands of high-quality jobs in a globally competitive industry, and wastes billions of dollars of investments planned or already in-progress for offshore wind projects. Projects of this sort are critical to fulfilling President Biden’s promise to deploy 30 gigawatts of offshore wind in the United States by 2030, and to compete with China’s rapidly expanding offshore wind industry.

Section 71106 would overturn this arbitrary offshore wind leasing ban to enable those in North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida—states that are home to some of the highest offshore wind energy capacity potentials in the country—to advance offshore wind projects along the coastline. This critical provision would jumpstart clean energy development at a time when it is needed most, and ensure that these states are free to be a part of this competitive new industry.

This provision has been endorsed by bipartisan organizations including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, American Clean Power Association, American Waterways Operators, National Association of

¹ “Memorandum on the Withdrawal of Certain Areas of the United States Outer Continental Shelf from Leasing Disposition,” <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/memorandum-withdrawal-certain-areas-united-states-outer-continental-shelf-leasing-disposition/>; “Presidential Determination on the Withdrawal of Certain Areas of the United States Outer Continental Shelf from Leasing Disposition,” <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-determination-withdrawal-certain-areas-united-states-outer-continental-shelf-leasing-disposition/>

Manufacturers, National Ocean Industries Association, League of Conservation Voters, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, Natural Resources Defense Council, Oceana, Ocean Conservancy, Southeastern Wind Coalition, and Southern Environmental Law Center.

Overturing this arbitrary ban is critical to the production of clean energy here in the United States, creating high quality jobs, and improving America's competitiveness on the global scale. Accordingly, we urge you to ensure that this provision remains in the legislation.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



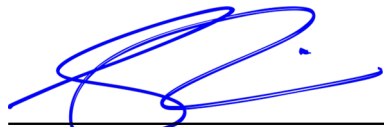
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



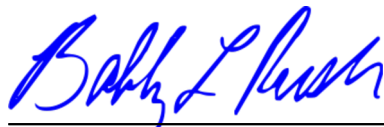
Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress



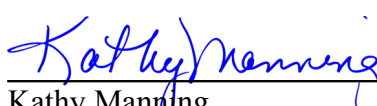
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Kathy Manning
Member of Congress



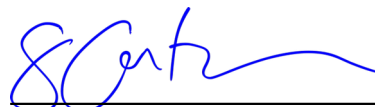
Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress



David E. Price
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Charlie Crist
Member of Congress



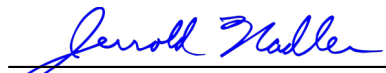
Kathy Castor
Member of Congress




Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



James R. Langevin
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



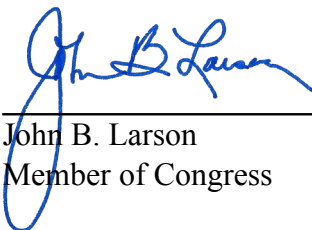
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Troy Carter
Member of Congress



Mondaire Jones
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress