



July 27, 2017

Ms. Kelly Hammerle
National Program Manager
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
45600 Woodland Rd
Mailstop VAM-LD
Sterling, VA 20166

RE: Request for information on 2019-2024 Outer Continental Shelf Oil & Gas Leasing Program

Dear Ms. Hammerle:

Thank you for this opportunity to convey the Alaska Chamber's support for including all 26 Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) planning areas in the development of the Draft Proposed Program.

The Alaska Chamber is a non-profit founded in 1953 working to promote a positive business environment in Alaska. The Chamber is the voice of small land large business representing hundreds of employers and local chambers across Alaska. Our member companies employ over 100,000 hard-working Alaskans. We support responsible resource development that is both done in a responsible manner and brings economic opportunity to Alaska and its residents.

The Beaufort and Chuckchi seas off Alaska potentially hold an overabundance of oil and gas resources. Together these areas are estimated to hold 23.6 billion barrels of oil and 104 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Not only would oil and gas development in this area provide up to 35,000 direct and indirect jobs over the next 50 years, it represents energy security for the nation and billions of dollars injected into the economy. Its development also means the continued integrity of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). TAPS has safely transported more than 17 billion barrels of oil since it came online over 40 years ago, and we look to maintaining it as a critical link to America's energy distribution for years to come.

The Alaska Chamber recently conducted a public opinion survey in which 67% of Alaskans support exploration and production of oil and gas in Alaska's arctic offshore. Given the overwhelming support of Alaskans and its economic importance to Alaska and the country we're urging you to include these areas in the new 5-year leasing plan being developed.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Curtis W. Thayer'.

Curtis W. Thayer
President & CEO