



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

DANIEL J FOREST LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

August 14, 2014

Ms. Kelly Hammerle
Five Year Program
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
381 Elden Street HM-3120
Herndon, VA 20170

**RE: Request for Information and Comments on the Preparation of the 2017-2022
Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program**

Dear Ms. Hammerle:

As the Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina, I serve as President of the North Carolina Senate and as the chair of the North Carolina Energy Policy Council. It is imperative for the nation's and North Carolina's energy independence and economic prosperity that North Carolina's federal OCS acreage be open to leases and energy exploration.

In North Carolina, we have adopted an all-of-the-above energy strategy to ensure the continued existence of cost-effective, safe, and reliable energy. Part of our goal in North Carolina is to identify and responsibly utilize available domestic sources of energy, including natural gas. North Carolina has over 64 million acres of federal OCS acreage—the most on the east coast. Natural gas is beneficial in that it is cost-effective, efficient, and its use produces much cleaner emissions than that of other energy sources.

Exploring an abundant source of natural gas in North Carolina's federal OCS acreage will move the State and the nation closer to our goal of becoming energy independent. The amounts of natural gas present in the Atlantic OCS would solidify our country's position as an energy leader for decades to come. Mobil Corporation estimated there exists five trillion cubic feet of natural gas in just two units off the North Carolina coast that comprise only 10,000 acres. The importance of having these reserves available for lease in the next five-year cycle cannot be overstated.

Finally, the economic impact to the nation and the State of North Carolina is immense. Besides lowering costs and providing more efficient energy, OCS exploration would create thousands of jobs in on-shore, off-shore, and infrastructure industries. It is essential that we explore every possible means of job creation. North Carolinians support OCS exploration overwhelmingly, and it is my hope that the program for 2017-2022 will include leasing and exploration of North Carolina's federal OCS acreage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Forest".

Dan Forest
Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina