

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 736
By Burchett

A RESOLUTION memorializing the President and the Congress of the United States to make the nation's Outer Continental Shelf available for energy development in an environmentally responsible manner.

WHEREAS, policies of the federal government have placed much of the nation's Outer Continental Shelf off-limits to oil and natural gas production; and

WHEREAS, development of oil and natural gas resources, where allowed off our shore, has coexisted for decades with recreational and commercial activities while benefiting the entire nation; and

WHEREAS, America's increased dependence on foreign energy supplies and global competition for oil and natural gas will create a threat to our national security; and

WHEREAS, U.S. energy use is growing twice as fast as U.S. energy production; since 2000, natural gas prices have increased 140 percent and oil prices have increased 107 percent; and

WHEREAS, the nation's farming and ranching sectors depend on a reliable and affordable supply of energy to run equipment, fertilize crops, and transport products to market; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has estimated that farmers' fuel expenses for 2005 exceeded their 2004 fuel expenses by 37 percent, and higher energy prices mean increased costs to farmers and ranchers, who already face tremendous economic challenges; and

WHEREAS, farmers' fuel, oil, and electricity expenditures have increased from \$8.6 billion to \$11.5 billion since 1999, according to the USDA; these increases represent a \$4.5

billion decline in the U.S. fertilizer industry, which uses natural gas as a raw material to produce nitrogen fertilizer; since 2002, 36 percent of the U.S. fertilizer industry has been shut down or mothballed; and

WHEREAS, rising energy costs are also taking a toll on poor families throughout the nation; according to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, 32 percent of families had to sacrifice medical care, 24 percent of families failed to make their rent or mortgage payment, 20 percent of families were without food for at least a day, and 44 percent of families skipped paying or paid less than their home energy bill in the past year; and

WHEREAS, in spite of significant progress in energy efficiency, the U.S. will still need 32 percent more energy to support economic growth by 2025; and

WHEREAS, the United States Outer Continental Shelf is conservatively estimated to hold over 466 trillion cubic feet of technically recoverable natural gas and 91 billion barrels of technically recoverable oil; and

WHEREAS, as this nation seizes the challenge of increasing domestic energy production, it is important to remember that those public lands that lie off our nation's coasts hold enormous potential for energy production, which could significantly help to meet the energy needs of all Americans; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this General Assembly hereby memorializes the President of the United States of America, the Honorable George W. Bush, to revoke administrative withdrawals on offshore energy development on the nation's Outer Continental Shelf and direct the Minerals Management Service to contract for test wells to be drilled thereon in order to provide needed energy resources to the United States in an environmentally responsible manner.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge and encourage the Congress of the United States of America to make the nation's Outer Continental Shelf available for energy development in an environmentally responsible manner.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chief Clerk of the Senate is directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States of America, the President of the

Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Congress, the delegation representing the state of Tennessee in the Congress of the United States, and the United States Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Energy.