



January 23, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
The Honorable Nita Lowey
House Appropriations Committee
H-305 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran
The Honorable Pat Leahy
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Cochran, and Vice-Chairman Leahy:

As Congress plans the final text for the FY 2018 Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, the National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA) and the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) respectfully urge the committee to reject any language that would restrict the ability of the Department of the Interior (DOI) to administer offshore wind leases or advance offshore wind production within 30 nautical miles off the State of Maryland shoreline during FY 2018 (House Bill Sec. 438) or subsequent fiscal years, as well as any other language which may impinge on lawful offshore energy leaseholder rights.

NOIA is the only national trade association representing all segments of the offshore industry with an interest in the exploration and production of both traditional and renewable energy resources on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf. The NOIA membership comprises more than 250 companies engaged in a variety of business activities, including production, drilling, engineering, marine and air transport, offshore construction, equipment manufacturing and supply, telecommunications, finance and insurance, and renewable energy.

AWEA is a national trade association representing a broad range of entities with a common interest in encouraging the expansion and facilitation of wind energy resources in the United States. AWEA members include wind turbine manufacturers, component suppliers, project developers, project owners and operators, financiers, researchers, renewable energy supporters, utilities, marketers, customers, and their advocates.

We are concerned that the language included in Section 438 of the House bill would violate the lease and contract sanctity which is critical to the responsible and timely development of offshore energy resources. The significant investment of capital, resources and manpower needed to develop offshore energy resources requires a lawful and stable process and should not be subject to threat through the annual appropriations process. Once a lease is issued, DOI has an obligation, through contractual commitment with the lease holder, to proceed in an orderly process to approve siting, production and development of the lease. By restricting funds for DOI to work with the leaseholder as a partner, the amendment threatens the sanctity of the lease contract made with DOI and the investments and costs faced by the lease developer.

Therefore we encourage you to work to ensure that this language, and any similar language restricting the ability of leaseholders to work in concert with the responsible federal agencies, be kept out of the final bill. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to reach out to either of us.

Sincerely,

Randall Luthi
President
National Ocean Industries Association

Thomas C. Kiernan
Chief Executive Officer
American Wind Energy Association