



THE VOICE of BUSINESS

July 25, 2017

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

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

Dear Ms. Hammerle:

In response to the request for information on the development of the federal government's 2019-2024 offshore oil and gas leasing program, I write to convey my strong support for developing a new leasing plan and urge the inclusion of all Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) planning areas in the development of the Draft Proposed Program (DPP). The Virginia Chamber of Commerce, representing over 26,000 businesses in the Commonwealth, believes a balanced, sustainable energy policy is essential to support economic development and job growth while meeting the growing needs of our population and business community.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) estimates that the Atlantic OCS holds more than 11 billion barrels of oil equivalent, and a previous study indicates that Atlantic OCS development could contribute nearly 280,000 jobs, over \$23 billion annually in economic activity, and \$51 billion in cumulative government revenue. However, these estimates are based on seismic surveys conducted more than 30 years ago, and anticipated upcoming seismic activity that utilizes modern technology is likely to increase Mid- and South Atlantic OCS resource estimates and the economic and energy supply benefits that their development is projected to generate. Inclusion of the Mid- and South Atlantic in the DPP is critical to maintaining industry interest in obtaining updated resource data, which would ultimately pave the way for more economically and environmentally effective and efficient exploration in a large part of the Atlantic OCS.

The capacity of the U.S. to achieve and maintain long-term energy security will require access to the nation's abundant natural resources, with OCS oil and gas resources in new areas playing a vital role in reaching that goal. The country's continued reliance on energy imports and challenging economic conditions underscore the necessity for federal actions that do not prematurely foreclose new opportunities to develop domestic resources in places like the Atlantic that would help ensure American energy security and help reduce our trade deficit with other nations.

For the reasons stated above, I strongly support inclusion of the Atlantic OCS planning areas in the DPP. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barry E. DuVal". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Barry E. DuVal  
President and CEO