

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

May 20, 2025

The Honorable Pete Stauber - Committee Chairman
The Honorable Yassamin Ansari - Ranking Member

Testimony of Cory Kief

Good morning, Chairman Stauber, Ranking Member Ansari, and all of the committee members in attendance today. It is an honor and a privilege to come before you today!

I am here today to share my thought on the recent bills to be introduced in the 119th Congress by Congressman Clay Higgins (HR 513) and Congressman Wesley Hunt (HR 2556). As I understand, these two bills would limit the executive authority of POTUS relative to cancelations of lease sales, and to better identify and evaluate what is available for development and production of natural resources in this great nation.

Let me start by explaining the Service industry that I represent. I am the Director of Business Development and Governmental Affairs for Crosby Tugs located in Galliano, LA. We provide marine towing services for the energy and civil sectors of the U.S. Our fleet of 130 vessels navigate the inland waters, rivers, gulf and oceans of this great nation. We operate domestically and internationally. I have 49 years of experience in this industry and began my service as an ordinary seaman and worked through the ranks to become an executive in this field. I also serve in several civic capacities as outlined in my biography.

My comments on Congressman Higgins' bill are that limiting the authority of POTUS to withdraw lands from leasing, that are necessary for offshore production of energy, is critical. The U.S. needs every electron, barrel of oil, or foot of gas it can harvest to meet growing energy demands.

My comments on Congressman Hunts' bill are that there are so many regions in this nation that are off limits which are vital to our nation's goal for energy independence. I do believe that the last evaluations were done, in some regions, in the 1960's which are incomplete and outdated. I am sure that new seismic technology today could help to better understand just exactly what is out there. I do believe that would be good to know! Also, Canada to the North, Russia to the Northwest, Mexico and Cuba to the south may be actively harvesting resources from our regions that WE should be harvesting.

These bills complement each other. The Offshore Lands Authorities Act makes sure lands are available for leasing for generations to come and only the most sensitive areas can be

withdrawn and must be reconsidered every 20 years in order to be withdrawn again. No more permanent withdraws. The CORE Act looks at these areas and lets policy makers, like Dr. Cruickshank here from BOEM, know the resource potential, so that when leasing occurs it can be directed in a strategic way. It's as simple as that.

Without areas to lease, operations like those of Crosby Tugs and many other vessel operators, rig workers, engineers, service companies and others are in jeopardy of being phased out. Without resource assessments, the already dysfunctional federal government will be left to make decisions with even less information, and outright outdated and inaccurate information.

Although these measures are important, in no way are they near enough to have a national energy policy that is substantial enough to attract investment. Mr. Chairman and Ranking member, you all may as well come to terms that the U.S. is simply NOT an attractive place to invest in the energy sector. This nation must fix the permitting processes and we must do it for all energy sources and all infrastructure projects. Too much time is being wasted bickering about which sector of energy is better than the other. Too much blame about who shut down Oil and Gas, and who shut down renewables. When the fact is that ALL sectors of energy should be brought on line. That's right.... I said ALL!

There is no place in the world that wakes up every morning demanding less energy. ALL regions of the world want more, and more. There is a smart way to do it, but it seems that you haven't figured that out yet. If you don't figure it out soon, we will be forced to buy energy from some other places in the world who will capitalize on our weaknesses.

Did you know that the revenue generated for the U.S. Treasury by the sale of leases and royalties generated by the production of Oil and Gas was second only to Federal Income taxes? Millions of people who depend on the energy sector for jobs. They are negatively affected by government overreach as well, all because our government can't get its act together. Thank goodness we have a nation who wants energy independence, but the good people of this nation don't have a government that we can depend on to make that happen.

As my grandmother used to say.... Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die. Everybody wants to lose weight, but nobody wants to stop eating and start exercising.

The messaging is wrong as well. It is insane to believe that renewables will replace fossil fuels. But we can bring another source of energy on line that will help to satisfy the need for energy and we've done it in the past without sacrificing other energy inputs. The political machine is hurting us. The world is watching and forming their own opinion about how great this nation really is.

I believe these bills are a step in the right direction to begin to get the U.S. back on track to have better energy policies but this committee and the federal government has more work to do as well.

We deserve better....

Thank You!