

(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R.** 5616

To require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct certain offshore lease sales.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MR. Graves of LA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct certain offshore lease sales.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Bringing Reliable In-  
5 vestment into Domestic Gulf Energy Production Act of  
6 2023” or the “BRIDGE Production Act of 2023”.

7 **SEC. 2. OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS LEASE SALES.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1           (1) OFFSHORE LEASE SALE.—The term “off-  
2           shore lease sale” means an oil and gas lease sale—

3                   (A) that is held by the Secretary in accord-  
4                   ance with the Outer Continental Shelf Lands  
5                   Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.), notwithstanding  
6                   the requirements of section 18 of that Act (43  
7                   U.S.C. 1344);

8                   (B) offers the same lease form, lease  
9                   terms, economic conditions, and stipulations as  
10                  contained in the final notice of sale entitled  
11                  “Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf Oil  
12                  and Gas Lease Sale 257” (86 Fed. Reg. 54728  
13                  (October 4, 2021)); and

14                  (C) that, if any acceptable bids have been  
15                  received for any tract offered in the lease sale,  
16                  results in the issuance of leases within 90 days  
17                  of the sale to the highest bids on the tracts of-  
18                  fered, subject to the Bureau of Ocean Energy  
19                  Management “Summary of Procedures for De-  
20                  termining Bid Adequacy at Offshore Oil and  
21                  Gas Lease Sales Effective March 2016, with  
22                  Central Gulf of Mexico Sale 241 and Eastern  
23                  Gulf of Mexico Sale 226”.

24           (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
25           the Secretary of the Interior.

1 (b) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive any other re-  
2 quirements under section 18 of the Outer Continental  
3 Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1344) that would delay final  
4 approval of an offshore lease sale under subsection (c).

5 (c) REQUIREMENT.—Notwithstanding section 18 of  
6 the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1344),  
7 the Secretary shall—

8 (1) conduct not fewer than 4 offshore lease  
9 sales during the 2-year period beginning on the date  
10 of enactment of this Act; and

11 (2) ensure that the 2017–2022 Outer Conti-  
12 nental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program Final  
13 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and  
14 Record of Decision shall apply to lease sales con-  
15 ducted under this subsection and shall be sufficient  
16 for purposes of complying with the National Envi-  
17 ronmental Policy Act for offshore lease sales con-  
18 ducted under this subsection to the extent it does  
19 not conflict with this Act.

20 (d) TIMING.—In conducting the offshore lease sales  
21 required under subsection (c), the Secretary shall conduct  
22 an offshore lease sale not later than—

- 23 (1) March 31, 2024;  
24 (2) August 31, 2024;  
25 (3) March 31, 2025; and

1 (4) August 31, 2025.

2 (e) AREA OFFERED FOR LEASE.—

3 (1) ACREAGE.—The Secretary shall offer not  
4 fewer than 80,000,000 acres for each offshore lease  
5 sale conducted under subsection (c).

6 (2) LOCATION.—An offshore lease sale con-  
7 ducted under subsection (c) shall be in the Gulf of  
8 Mexico Region Program Area as identified in Figure  
9 S–1 of the 2017–2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil  
10 and Gas Leasing Proposed Final Program published  
11 on November 18, 2016, by the Bureau of Ocean En-  
12 ergy Management (as announced in the notice of  
13 availability of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Manage-  
14 ment entitled “Notice of Availability of the 2017–  
15 2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing  
16 Proposed Final Program” (81 Fed. Reg. 84612 (No-  
17 vember 23, 2016)).

18 (f) EFFECT OF LITIGATION.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—A civil action challenging an  
20 offshore lease sale conducted under this section shall  
21 not—

22 (A) affect the validity of any lease issued  
23 under such an offshore lease sale; and

24 (B) except as provided in paragraph  
25 (3)(B), cause a delay in the timelines for the

1 consideration of any exploration plan, develop-  
2 ment plan, development operations coordination  
3 document, applications for permit to drill, or  
4 other application for a Federal agency author-  
5 ization or approval for activities on a lease  
6 issued under such an offshore lease sale.

7 (2) REMAND; PROCESSING OF APPROVALS AND  
8 APPLICATIONS.—If, in a civil action described in  
9 paragraph (1), a court finds that the offshore lease  
10 sale was not carried out in compliance with Federal  
11 law—

12 (A) the court shall not—

13 (i) set aside, vacate, or enjoin the off-  
14 shore lease sale; or

15 (ii) set aside, vacate, or enjoin the  
16 leases issued pursuant to the offshore lease  
17 sale; or

18 (iii) enjoin the Secretary from issuing  
19 leases to the highest bidders in the chal-  
20 lenged offshore lease sale;

21 (B) the court shall remand the matter to  
22 the Secretary and require the Secretary to cor-  
23 rect the noncompliance; and

24 (C) the Secretary shall continue to process  
25 all exploration plans, development plans, devel-

1           opment operations coordination documents, ap-  
2           plications for a permit to drill, and other appli-  
3           cations for a Federal agency authorization or  
4           other approval for activities requested under  
5           any lease issued under the challenged offshore  
6           lease sale in accordance with the Outer Conti-  
7           nental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et  
8           seq.).

9           (3) NOTICE.—

10           (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 10 days  
11           after the date on which a civil action described  
12           in paragraph (1) is served on the United  
13           States, the Secretary shall notify the holder of  
14           any lease issued, or apparent high bidder if the  
15           lease has not yet been issued, under the off-  
16           shore lease sale that is the subject of the civil  
17           action of the filing of the civil action.

18           (B) TIMELINE.—Not later than 90 days  
19           after the date of receipt of a notice under sub-  
20           paragraph (A), the holder of the lease may file  
21           with the Secretary, and the Secretary may ap-  
22           prove, a request to pause the timeline with re-  
23           spect to the term of the lease during any period  
24           in which the civil action is pending.