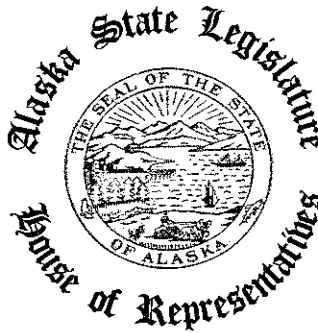


REPRESENTATIVE
CHARISSE MILLETT

Anchorage

Representative_Charisse_Millett@legis.state.ak.us



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Mr. J.F. Bennett, Chief
Branch of Environmental Assessment
Minerals Management Service
381 Elden Street, MS 4042
Herndon, Virginia 20170

**RE: Environmental Impact Statement for the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas
leasing Program for 2012-2017**

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Recent events in the Gulf of Mexico have cast an international spotlight on the risks and rewards of oil production on America's outer continental shelf. The accident on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig that took the lives of eleven workers and the blowout is a national tragedy, however, we cannot ignore the tremendous amount of energy OCS production currently provides for our country.

Alaska's OCS reserves could hold more oil than what has already been produced from the largest oil field in North America, Prudhoe Bay. The federal government estimates Alaska's OCS holds a staggering *27 billion barrels of oil and 130 trillion cubic feet of natural gas*.

That is enough energy to fuel the nation's energy needs for decades into the future. It will create jobs and tax revenues that will help pull our country out of the global recession and increase our energy independence.

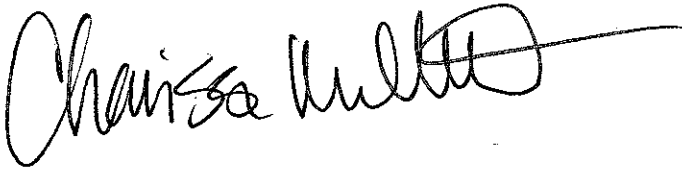
It is also important to distinguish between OCS development in Alaska and the Gulf of Mexico. Drilling in the Gulf of Mexico takes place at extraordinary depths of a mile or more, while drilling in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas will be done at depths of around 150 feet.

Oil and gas production has taken place in the Gulf of Alaska at similar depths for more than 40 years and has produced a solid safety and environmental record that clearly shows existing technology will work in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas.

OCS production will also keep the Trans-Alaska Pipeline in operation and Alaska's economy viable for future generations to come.

Renewable energy is an important part of our national energy mix but until the technology improves to the point where it can reliably and affordably begin to replace non-renewable sources, we must continue to develop domestic oil and gas supplies. Alaska's OCS reserves can be a cornerstone in the country's energy plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charisse Millett", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rep. Charisse Millett