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OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES:

As the Committee convenes today to consider the nomination of Representative Debra Haaland to be Secretary of the Interior, the Chamber encourages you to focus particular attention on the Department's "multiple use" mandate in its management of federal lands.

Congress has explicitly directed the Department of Interior to develop energy resources on the lands and waters it oversees. However, we are greatly concerned by initial actions taken by the new Administration. Within hours of the inauguration, the Acting Secretary issued an order effectively halting the issuance of leases, lease extensions, and permits for oil and natural gas development on federal lands and waters. Subsequently, President Biden issued Executive Order 14008 which indefinitely banned leasing of federal lands and waters for oil and natural gas development.

Federal lands account for nearly 30% of the entire U.S. land mass. Energy production on federal lands and waters provides 22% of total U.S. oil production and 12% of total natural gas production. If U.S. federal lands were an independent entity, it would be the ninth largest global producer of both oil and natural gas. Preempting new energy production in such an enormous area of land is bad economic and energy policy and deleterious to addressing climate change.

Taking actions to stop new oil and natural gas production on federal lands and waters will create dire economic consequences in several states like New Mexico, Colorado, Montana, Alaska, Louisiana, and Wyoming. Moreover, these actions will not lessen demand for these energy sources and will force Americans to rely on new sources resulting in the supply moving from federal lands and waters to private lands in other states as well as increased imports. These replacement supplies will necessarily result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions making this approach counterproductive in addressing climate change.

We are confident the Committee will fully discuss these issues with Representative Haaland during the hearing and we encourage you to elicit a change in the administration's approach to leasing on federal lands and waters as part of this confirmation process.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,



Neil L. Bradley