

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9024

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to submit a report and maintain publicly available data on expressions of interests, applications for permits to drill, and offshore geological and geophysical survey licenses, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2022

Mr. TIFFANY (for himself and Mr. WESTERMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to submit a report and maintain publicly available data on expressions of interests, applications for permits to drill, and offshore geological and geophysical survey licenses, and for other purposes.

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 “Directing Responsi-
5 bility to Interior for Leases and Licenses Act” or the
6 “DRILL Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST; APPLICATIONS FOR**
2 **PERMITS TO DRILL; OFFSHORE GEOLOGICAL**
3 **AND GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY LICENSING.**

4 (a) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the date
5 of enactment of this section, the Secretary of the Interior
6 shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of
7 the House of Representatives and the Committee on En-
8 ergy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that
9 describes—

10 (1) the status of nominated parcels for future
11 onshore oil and gas lease sales, including—

12 (A) the number of expressions of interest
13 that the Bureau of Land Management has not
14 taken any action to review, or not completed re-
15 view of, as of the date of enactment of this sec-
16 tion; and

17 (B) how long such expressions of interest
18 have been pending;

19 (2) the status of each pending application for a
20 permit to drill, including the number of applications
21 received, in each Bureau of Land Management State
22 office as of the date of enactment of this section, in-
23 cluding—

24 (A) a description of the cause of delay for
25 pending applications, including as a result of
26 staffing shortages, technical limitations, incom-

plete applications, and incomplete review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) or other applicable laws;

(B) the number of days an application has been pending in violation of section 17(p)(2) of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 226(p)(2)); and

(C) steps the office is taking to come into compliance with the requirements of section 17(p)(2) of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 226(p)(2));

(3) the number of permits to drill issued by each Bureau of Land Management State office as of the date of enactment of this section;

(4) the status of each pending application for a license for offshore geological and geophysical surveys, including the number of applications received, in each Bureau of Ocean Energy management regional office, including—

(A) a description of any cause of delay for pending applications, including as a result of staffing shortages, technical limitations, incomplete applications, and incomplete review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act

1 of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) or other ap-
2 plicable laws;

3 (B) the number of days an application has
4 been pending; and

5 (C) steps the Bureau of Ocean Energy
6 Management is taking to complete review of
7 each application;

8 (5) the number of licenses for offshore geologi-
9 cal and geophysical surveys issued by each Bureau
10 of Ocean Energy Management regional office as of
11 the date of enactment of this section;

12 (6) the status of each pending application for a
13 permit to drill, including the number of applications
14 received, in each Bureau of Safety and Environ-
15 mental Enforcement regional office, including—

16 (A) a description of any cause of delay for
17 pending applications, including as a result of
18 staffing shortages, technical limitations, incom-
19 plete applications, and incomplete review pursu-
20 ant to the National Environmental Policy Act
21 of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) or other ap-
22 plicable laws;

23 (B) the number of days an application has
24 been pending; and

1 (C) steps the Bureau of Safety and Envi-
2 ronmental Enforcement is taking to complete
3 review of each application;

4 (7) the number of permits to drill issued by
5 each Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforce-
6 ment regional office as of the date of enactment of
7 this section;

8 (8) how, as applicable, the Bureau of Land
9 Management, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Manage-
10 ment, and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental
11 Enforcement determines whether to—

12 (A) issue a license for geological and geo-
13 physical surveys;

14 (B) issue a permit to drill; and

15 (C) issue, extend, or suspend an oil and
16 gas lease;

17 (9) when determinations described in paragraph
18 (8) are sent to the national office of the Bureau of
19 Land Management, the Bureau of Ocean Energy
20 Management, or the Bureau of Safety and Environ-
21 mental Enforcement for final approval;

22 (10) the degree to which Bureau of Land Man-
23 agement, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management,
24 and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforce-

1 ment field, State, and regional offices exercise dis-
2 cretion on such final approval;

3 (11) the number of auctioned leases receiving
4 accepted bids that have not been issued to winning
5 bidders and the number days such leases have not
6 been issued; and

7 (12) a description of the uses of application for
8 permit to drill fees paid by permit holders over the
9 previous 5-year period.

10 (b) PENDING APPLICATIONS FOR PERMITS TO
11 DRILL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enact-
12 ment of this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall
13 issue all pending applications for a permit to drill that
14 meet the requirements of section 17(p)(2) of the Mineral
15 Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 226(p)(2)).

16 (c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF DATA.—

17 (1) MINERAL LEASING ACT.—Section 17 of the
18 Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 226) is amended by
19 adding at the end the following:

20 “(s) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF DATA.—

21 “(1) EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST.—Not later
22 than 30 days after the date of enactment of this
23 subsection, and each month thereafter, the Secretary
24 shall publish on the website of the Department of
25 the Interior the number of pending, approved, and

1 not approved expressions of interest in nominated
2 parcels for future onshore oil and gas lease sales in
3 the preceding month.

4 “(2) APPLICATIONS FOR PERMITS TO DRILL.—
5 Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment
6 of this subsection, and each month thereafter, the
7 Secretary shall publish on the website of the Depart-
8 ment of the Interior the number of pending and ap-
9 proved applications for permits to drill in the pre-
10 ceding month in each State office.

11 “(3) PAST DATA.—Not later than 30 days after
12 the date of enactment of this subsection, the Sec-
13 retary shall publish on the website of the Depart-
14 ment of the Interior, with respect to the 5-year pe-
15 riod ending on the date of enactment of this sub-
16 section—

17 “(A) the number of approved and not ap-
18 proved expressions of interest for onshore oil
19 and gas lease sales during such 5-year period;
20 and

21 “(B) the number of approved and not ap-
22 proved applications for permits to drill during
23 such 5-year period.”.

24 (2) OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF LANDS ACT.—
25 Section 8 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act

1 (43 U.S.C. 1337) is amended by adding at the end
2 the following:

3 “(q) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF DATA.—

4 “(1) OFFSHORE GEOLOGICAL AND GEO-
5 PHYSICAL SURVEY LICENSES.—Not later than 30
6 days after the date of enactment of this subsection,
7 and each month thereafter, the Secretary shall pub-
8 lish on the website of the Department of the Interior
9 the number of pending and approved applications for
10 licenses for offshore to geological and geophysical
11 surveys in the preceding month.

12 “(2) APPLICATIONS FOR PERMITS TO DRILL.—
13 Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment
14 of this subsection, and each month thereafter, the
15 Secretary shall publish on the website of the Depart-
16 ment of the Interior the number of pending and ap-
17 proved applications for permits to drill on the outer
18 Continental Shelf in the preceding month in each re-
19 gional office.

20 “(3) PAST DATA.—Not later than 30 days after
21 the date of enactment of this subsection, the Sec-
22 retary shall publish on the website of the Depart-
23 ment of the Interior, with respect to the 5-year pe-
24 riod ending on the date of enactment of this sub-
25 section—

1 “(A) the number of approved applications
2 for licenses for offshore geological and geo-
3 physical surveys; and

4 “(B) the number of approved applications
5 for permits to drill on the outer Continental
6 Shelf.”.

7 (d) REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTS AND
8 COMMUNICATIONS.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after
10 the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary
11 of the Interior shall submit to the Committee on En-
12 ergy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the
13 Committee on Natural Resources of the House of
14 Representatives all documents and communications
15 relating to the comprehensive review of Federal oil
16 and gas permitting and leasing practices required
17 under section 208 of Executive Order 14008 (86
18 Fed. Reg. 7624; relating to tackling the climate cri-
19 sis at home and abroad).

20 (2) INCLUSIONS.—The submission under para-
21 graph (1) shall include all documents and commu-
22 nications submitted to the Secretary of the Interior
23 by members of the public in response to any public
24 meeting or forum relating to the comprehensive re-
25 view described in that paragraph.

1 **SEC. 3. STAFF PLANNING REPORT.**

2 The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of
3 Agriculture shall each annually submit to the Committee
4 on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and
5 the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the
6 Senate a report on the staffing capacity of each respective
7 agency with respect to issuing oil, gas, coal, and renewable
8 energy leases, rights-of-way, easements, and permits.
9 Each such report shall include—

10 (1) the number of staff assigned to oil, gas,
11 coal, and renewable energy leasing and permitting,
12 respectively; and

13 (2) a description of how many staff are needed
14 to meet statutory requirements for such leasing and
15 permitting and how, as applicable, the Department
16 of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture
17 plans to address staffing shortfalls for such leasing
18 and permitting.

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