

March 19, 2024

Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, and Members of the House of Representatives:

On behalf of the undersigned conservation, climate, and public lands organizations, we write today in strong opposition to H.R. 6009, the Restoring American Energy Dominance Act. This legislation circumvents and undermines the administrative process, ignores significant public input across the West, and halts a long overdue update to the federal onshore oil and gas leasing program that protects taxpayers, public lands and the wildlife and communities who rely on them. More importantly, it would prevent Interior from undertaking any substantially similar rule, effectively prohibiting the agency from doing its job to oversee the federal leasing program. We therefore urge all members of the House of Representatives to **vote no** on this harmful legislation.

The Bureau of Land Management's proposed [Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Rule](#) updates federal regulations to implement oil and gas program fiscal reforms enacted via the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). These reforms included increasing the royalty rate for producing oil and gas on federal public lands, realigning rents and fees to account for decades of inflation, and reducing speculation by ending non-competitive leasing and implementing a new nomination fee.

Beyond the IRA, the proposed rule includes a host of other long-overdue protections, including language to penalize routine abusers; preference criteria to steer leasing decisions away from critical habitat, cultural resources, and reduce speculation; and urgent bonding reforms that help ensure that oil and gas operators — rather than taxpayers and surrounding communities — bear the cost of cleaning up drilling sites after production ends.

The reforms in the IRA and this proposed rule — taken together — implement the baseline recommendations outlined by the [Department of the Interior](#), address dire shortcomings in the oil and gas bonding system identified by the [Government Accountability Office](#) and other nonpartisan watchdogs over many years, and ensure taxpayers are not subsidizing the oil industry and then paying to clean up drilling sites.

H.R. 6009 would require BLM to withdraw its proposed rule, scuttling many of these important fiscal reforms to protect taxpayers and complicating implementation of duly enacted statutes.

Moreover, the draft legislation runs contrary to the will of the general public. During the rule's 60-day comment period, over 260,000 Americans submitted public comments for the record — over [99 percent](#) of which were supportive of the rule.

Lastly, prohibiting the BLM from moving forward a substantially similar rule is a legislative poison pill. If enacted, it would preclude the agency from administering the federal onshore oil and gas program in the public interest and acknowledging challenges like climate change, extinction, and the clean energy transition — instead requiring that it maintain a broken status quo that favors special interest profits.

For these reasons, we oppose H.R. 6009, and we urge all members of the House of Representatives to **vote no** on passage.

Sincerely,

Accountable.US  
Archaeology Southwest  
Audubon Rockies  
Citizens for Clean Air, Grand Junction, CO  
Climate Action Campaign  
Climate Law & Policy Project  
Coalition to Protect America's National Parks  
Colorado Fiscal Institute  
Colorado Wildlands Project  
Colorado Wildlife Federation  
Conservation Colorado  
Conservation Lands Foundation  
Conservatives for Responsible Stewardship  
Dakota Resource Council  
Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance  
Earthjustice  
Earthworks  
EcoFlight  
Endangered Species Coalition  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Friends of the Earth US  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness - Grand Junction Area Chapter  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness - Northwest Colorado Chapter  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness  
HECHO  
Interfaith Power & Light  
League of Conservation Voters  
Los Pedros ForestWatch  
Montana Wildlife Federation  
National Audubon Society  
National Parks Conservation Association  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Nevada Conservation League  
Nevada Wildlife Federation  
New Mexico Voices for Children  
New Mexico Wildlife Federation  
Northern Plains Resource Council  
Nuestra Tierra  
Powder River Basin Resource Council  
Public Citizen

Rocky Mountain Farmers Union  
Rocky Mountain Wild  
Sheep Mountain Alliance  
Sierra Club  
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance  
The Wilderness Society  
Town of Nederland, CO  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Western Colorado Alliance  
Western Organization of Resource Councils  
Western Slope Conservation Center  
West Virginia Rivers Coalition  
Wild Montana  
Wilderness Workshop  
Wyoming Outdoor Council