

that, we agree that the Interior Department is free to continue to implement the previous 2017 narrow plan.

In the meantime, it is true that the current administration is working on a new oil and gas drilling plan that would cover the 2019 to 2024 timeframe. This new plan, if implemented, would open up the entire East and West Coasts to drilling.

To date, the current administration has put out one iteration of its plan, with two more to go. Despite not having completed the process, the administration has acknowledged it is already conducting pre-lease work in the mid-Atlantic, south Atlantic, and southern California planning areas.

The budget for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management states that it is preparing “four new environmental impact statements for the lease sales that are planned in early 2020 or early 2021,” which is where the problem comes in.

The new 5-year plan, which is nothing more than a work in progress, is under siege, both from the courts and a complete lack of political support. In late March, a Federal court reinstated the moratorium in the north Atlantic planning area. That decision has essentially frozen work on the new plan.

In fact, the Secretary told me, under questioning in an Interior Subcommittee hearing last month, that he did not know the outcome of the proposed plan. He said a new plan wasn’t “imminent.” He was also quick to point out that no previous 5-year plan has ever included drilling in a State that was opposed to such activity.

If that is his bottom line, then he might as well throw in the towel right now as there is not a single State along the Atlantic or Pacific Coasts that is in favor of drilling.

My home State of Maine has a \$5.6 billion tourism industry, 71 percent of which comes directly from the Maine coast. Thirty thousand Mainers make their living in marine industries. Our world-famous lobster fishery alone brings in \$500 million annually.

Our Governor, our Senators, our congressional delegation, and many of our cities and towns oppose the OCS drilling proposal.

As nearly one-third of the United States population lives in the coastal areas impacted by this proposal, and there is broad bipartisan opposition to this issue, moving forward makes no sense, either fiscally or practically.

The language in our Interior bill simply supports that position. It says to follow the law, complete all procedural steps, including responding to the concerns of the American public, the concerns of their Governors, and the concerns of their Members of Congress, before moving forward on individual drilling projects.

To the Department, it says to save its money until it completes the process and finds out if it can drill for oil off the coast of South Carolina or off the coast of Florida or off the coast of California.

Following a well-thought-out process, especially one contained in law, shouldn’t be controversial, and I don’t think it is.

As such, I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana; protect our coastlines from Maine to Florida, from Washington State to California; and support the process contained in the OCS Lands Act.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM).

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Chair, section 117 of this bill is just another example of the anti-American energy agenda being pushed by this Democratic majority.

The draft Outer Continental Shelf leasing program proposed by the Trump administration is actually a forward-looking energy policy that takes full advantage of our vast offshore oil and gas resources. This includes expanding lease sales in the eastern Gulf of Mexico in a manner that does not interfere with our critical defense mission.

In fact, fully utilizing our offshore mineral resources in the Gulf is vital to our national defense because it will make the U.S. more energy independent and will let us continue to be the worldwide leader in energy production.

The draft proposal in this program will also create thousands of jobs and boost economies of energy-producing States like Louisiana.

We should not delay offshore mineral leasing. Any attempt by the Democrats to stop an America- and Louisiana-first energy policy should be fought tooth and nail.

Mr. Chair, I thank my good friend for offering this amendment to strike section 117, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Chair, let me run through a few points here to see if I can clarify a number of the remarks.

The base text of the bill actually prevents the Department of the Interior from carrying out the steps that are required.

Think about the concept of what was said, Mr. Chair. It was said that they want the Department of the Interior to follow the law. Well, what would they be doing otherwise?

The provision in the bill, section 117, prevents them from carrying out pre-leasing activities. This text prevents them from being able to follow the law.

I am baffled by this, and I am happy to have a much longer discussion on how an offshore plan and leasing program is put together.

What the base text of the bill does is it tries to force the Obama-era plan from ever being changed. The base text prevents the process that is in the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act from being allowed to go forward.

Mr. Chair, what is really important to talk about here, when you go back to look at what energy policies and different administrative policies have done, do you know that back during the Obama administration in 2011, one half of this Nation’s trade deficit was attributable to us bringing in energy from other sources, bringing them in from foreign countries, empowering their economies, creating jobs in their countries?

I am an American. I represent people here. I am trying to help make sure that we have a healthy economy and that we have affordable energy.

Mr. Chair, folks are going to try and say, oh, this affects emissions and climate change. Our gas, which is replacing the dirtier Russian natural gas, is actually reducing global climate emissions, which is part of our strategy that has resulted in the United States having greater emissions reduction than any other country in the world.

It is really fun to go out and talk about all these things, but we have to keep this based in facts and statistics. This amendment makes sense. It simply does allow the Department of the Interior to follow the law, making sure we maximize our resources.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Chair, I am sorry to disagree, but I hope that my colleagues won’t be fooled by the comments coming from the proponents of this amendment.

This is not about energy security or energy imports and exports. It is not about jobs. Instead, this is about whether the Interior Department is going to be held to the same procedural standard we expect every other department and agency to adhere to.

□ 1530

Mr. Chair, if my colleagues think the Department of the Interior should follow the law and complete the process, then I urge them to oppose the gentleman’s amendment.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana will be postponed.

The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to Joint Resolutions of the following titles in which

the concurrence of the House is requested:

S.J. Res. 27. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Australia certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 28. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the United Arab Emirates of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 29. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 30. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the United Arab Emirates of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 31. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 32. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 33. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the United Arab Emirates of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 34. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the United Arab Emirates of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 35. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the United Arab Emirates of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 36. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Italian Republic of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 37. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Republic of France of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 38. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 39. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom of certain defense articles, including technical data and defense services.

S.J. Res. 40. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to India, Israel, Republic of Korea, and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia of certain defense articles, including technical data and defense services.

S.J. Res. 41. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the Government of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of technical data and defense services.

S.J. Res. 42. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and North-

ern Ireland of certain defense articles, including technical data and defense services.

S.J. Res. 43. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 44. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed retransfer of certain defense articles from the United Arab Emirates to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

S.J. Res. 45. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 46. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the United Arab Emirates certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 47. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 48. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the United Arab Emirates certain defense articles and services.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

The Committee resumed its sitting.

AMENDMENT NO. 161 OFFERED BY MR. HICE OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HIMES). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 161 printed in part B of House Report 116-119.

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of division C (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. Each amount made available by this Act (other than an amount required to be made available by a provision of law) is hereby reduced by 23.6 percent.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 445, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. HICE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today because of my deep concerns over our national debt.

At a time when our Federal debt exceeds \$22 trillion, I believe it is time that we make every effort possible to rein in spending so that we are not shackling future generations with this burden.

Division C of H.R. 3055 funds the EPA, Department of the Interior, and other land management agencies at \$37.4 billion and increases spending by \$1.6 billion over fiscal year 2019 levels.

The spending level in this division is 23.6 percent over the President's budget request. That is almost \$7 billion over the request, Mr. Chairman. We are not even close.

Without question, there are areas within these Federal agencies that need improvement. For example, we need desperately to fix the National Park Service maintenance backlog, and I commend Ranking Member BISHOP for his diligent work on that effort, and would urge passage, and at least bring to the floor his thoughtful and cost-effective bill to address that issue. But at the end of the day, the bottom line is our constituents back home are required week after week, month after month to make tough choices when it comes to planning their own household budgets, and we need to do the same right here in Congress.

My proposed amendment will reduce spending levels to the President's original budget request so that, just like our constituents back home, we go back to the table, we go back to the drawing board, and we make those same tough decisions.

Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of my amendment to rein in spending, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Maine is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Chair, I strongly oppose this amendment. I appreciate the thoughts of the gentleman, but this is the wrong place to go about it.

This amendment just indiscriminately cuts programs in this bill without any thought to the relative merit of the programs contained in the bill.

For instance, this cut would result in fewer patients seen at the Indian Health Service, fewer safety inspectors ensuring accidents do not occur, deferred maintenance on our Nation's water and sanitation infrastructure.

More generally, investments in our environmental infrastructure and our public lands will be halted and the associated jobs will be lost.

This amendment would not encourage the agencies to do more with less. Simply put, it would force the agencies and our constituents to do less with less.

Yes, it is true the Interior budget does not meet the same numbers that the President sent over to us, but the President cut the Environmental Protection Agency by a third, he cut the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities. I can make a very long list that the President cut that this Congress would never stand for.

So this does not stand. We cannot go back to the President's original budget. We must stand together to oppose this amendment, which if it was passed, would harm the American people.

Mr. Chair, I oppose this amendment and encourage my colleagues to join me in opposing it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. HICE).