

110TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6724

To terminate prohibitions on expenditures for, and withdrawals from, offshore oil and gas leasing off the coast of Virginia, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 31, 2008

Mr. CANTOR (for himself, Mrs. DRAKE, and Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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

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## A BILL

To terminate prohibitions on expenditures for, and withdrawals from, offshore oil and gas leasing off the coast of Virginia, 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 “Drill Offshore to Pay  
5 Less Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. TERMINATION OF PROHIBITIONS ON EXPENDI-**  
2 **TURES FOR, AND WITHDRAWALS FROM, OFF-**  
3 **SHORE OIL AND GAS LEASING OFF THE**  
4 **COAST OF VIRGINIA.**

5 (a) PROHIBITIONS ON EXPENDITURES.—Except as  
6 provided in subsection (c), all provisions of Federal law  
7 that prohibit the expenditure of appropriated funds to con-  
8 duct oil and natural gas leasing and preleasing activities  
9 shall have no force or effect with respect to any area of  
10 the Outer Continental Shelf off the coast of Virginia.

11 (b) WITHDRAWALS.—Except as provided in sub-  
12 section (c), all withdrawals of Federal submerged lands  
13 of the Outer Continental Shelf off the coast of Virginia  
14 from leasing, including withdrawals by the President  
15 under the authority of section 12(a) of the Outer Conti-  
16 nental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1341(a)), are hereby  
17 revoked and are no longer in effect with respect to the  
18 leasing of areas for exploration for, and development and  
19 production of, oil and natural gas.

20 (c) AREAS WITHIN 50 MILES OF THE COASTLINE.—  
21 Subsections (a) and (b) shall not apply with respect to  
22 any area of the Outer Continental Shelf located less than  
23 50 miles from the coastline of the United States.

24 **SEC. 3. STATE REQUEST FOR LEASING REQUIRED.**

25 Any area of the Outer Continental Shelf off the coast  
26 of Virginia shall not be available for leasing for exploration

1 for, or the development or production of, oil or natural  
2 gas unless the Governor of Virginia, with the concurrence  
3 of the Virginia State legislature, has submitted to the Sec-  
4 retary of the Interior a request that the Secretary make  
5 such area available for such leasing.

6 **SEC. 4. PROTECTION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE, HABITAT,**  
7 **SUBSISTENCE RESOURCES, AND THE ENVI-**  
8 **RONMENT.**

9 The Secretary of the Interior shall take such actions  
10 as are necessary to ensure that oil and gas exploration,  
11 development, and production activities under Federal  
12 leases of areas that are off the coast of Virginia will result  
13 in no significant adverse effect on fish and wildlife, their  
14 habitat, subsistence resources, and the environment, in-  
15 cluding by requiring the application of the best commer-  
16 cially available technology for oil and gas exploration, de-  
17 velopment, and production to all such activities in a man-  
18 ner that ensures the receipt by the public of the fair mar-  
19 ket value of the mineral resources that are subject to such  
20 leases.

21 **SEC. 5. USE OF REVENUES.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Amounts received by the United  
23 States in the form of bonus bids, rents, and royalties for  
24 oil and gas leases for areas of the Outer Continental Shelf  
25 off the coast of Virginia issued after the date of the enact-

1 ment of this Act shall be deposited into a separate account  
2 in the Treasury and available for use in accordance with  
3 this section.

4 (b) ALLOCATION.—Of the amount deposited under  
5 this section each fiscal year—

6 (1) 20 percent shall be deposited in a separate  
7 account in the Treasury that shall be administered  
8 by the Secretary of the Treasury and available to  
9 mitigate any environmental damages that occur as a  
10 result of exploration, development, or production of  
11 oil and gas under leases for areas of the Outer Con-  
12 tinental Shelf off the coast of Virginia, including  
13 damage caused by human error or natural disasters;  
14 and

15 (2) 80 percent shall be paid by the Secretary of  
16 the Treasury to the State of Virginia to administer  
17 cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay and watersheds in  
18 Virginia.

19 **SEC. 6. LIMITATION ON CONFLICT WITH MILITARY OPER-**  
20 **ATIONS.**

21 No person may engage in any exploration, develop-  
22 ment, or production of oil or natural gas off the coast of  
23 Virginia that would conflict with any military operation,  
24 as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

1 **SEC. 7. OFF THE COAST OF VIRGINIA DEFINED.**

2 For purposes of this Act—

3 (1) subject to paragraph (2), the term “off the  
4 coast of Virginia” means the area for which the laws  
5 of the State of Virginia are declared to be the law  
6 of the United States under section 4(a)(2)(A) of the  
7 Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C.  
8 1333(a)(2)(A)); and

9 (2) the extended boundaries referred to in that  
10 section are deemed for purposes of paragraph (1) to  
11 be as indicated on the map entitled “Atlantic OCS  
12 Region State Adjacent Zones and OCS Planning  
13 Areas”, dated September 2005 and on file in the Of-  
14 fice of the Director, Minerals Management Service.

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