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Statement of the Honorable Alcee L. Hastings
On Amendment #15 to H.R. 2231, the Offshore Energy and Jobs
Act
June 25, 2013

M.Chairman, today I offer an amendment to H.R. 2231, the *Offshore Energy and Jobs Act*. This amendment strikes section 204 of the underlying bill.

Section 204 seeks to limit the ability to conduct a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Given our experience with devastating oil spills such as the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the Exxon Valdez, and a spill off the coast of Santa Barbara, we should be improving our review processes and strengthening safety requirements.

The combination of reduced resources and tight timeframes that is mandated by the bill, as well as the expanse of area to be addressed, make the task of preparing a credible EIS difficult, if not impossible.

With these demanding schedules provided by Section 204, what information is compelling Congress to seek such swift approval action? Oil production is at a 20-year high and natural gas production is also at an all time high. Furthermore, under President Obama's leadership, our dependence on foreign oil has fallen from 57 to 36 percent.

Are the oil companies running out of oil on their leases? No. They are sitting on 30 million acres worth of approved leases.

So perhaps the oil companies are not doing so well? According to ThinkProgress the top oil companies have made \$118 billion profits in 2012. This follows on 2011 record profits of \$137 billion. The tax breaks that big oil enjoys are worth at least \$4 billion annually.

This bill is just one more gift to the big oil companies.

Clean renewable energy would not only help move us away from polluting fossil fuels responsible for climate change. It would also provide clean renewable energy to help us move towards energy independence.