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September 30, 2020

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
U.S. Senator
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Kennedy
U.S. Senator
416 Russell Senator Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Minority Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
2049 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cedric Richmond
U.S. House of Representatives
506 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Clay Higgins
U.S. House of Representatives
2459 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Johnson
U.S. House of Representatives
418 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ralph Abraham
U.S. House of Representatives
417 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Garret Graves
U.S. House of Representatives
2402 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators and Representatives:

Bayou Industrial Group (BIG) represents 150 businesses, advocacy groups and governmental organizations in the Lafourche, Terrebonne, St. Mary, and Assumption Parishes of southeastern Louisiana, a region that proudly considers itself “America’s working coast.” Here, we produce the energy that fuels America and our coastal communities play a vital role in servicing Gulf of Mexico oil and gas production.

BIG and our members appreciate the tremendous energy and economic benefits that offshore oil and gas production contribute to our region and our nation. We also understand too well how reductions in production of American oil and gas has devastating consequences for hundreds of thousands of workers and small businesses along the Gulf. That is why we urge you today to secure a consistent, long-term commitment to Gulf of Mexico energy access to ensure continued American energy dominance and economic security.

Now more than ever, it is critical that Congress ensures our nation’s energy security, protects our Gulf communities, and facilitates exploration and production opportunities for energy development in the existing available areas in the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico.

Recently, candidates for office have threatened to restrict new leasing on federal lands and offshore areas. A new analysis found that such a proposal, if enacted, would cause the loss of nearly 1 million jobs in the first 12-24 months, 48,000 of which are located here in Louisiana. If these restrictions were enacted it would significantly reduce our domestic energy production, making our nation once-again dependent on energy from foreign nations with less reliable supplies, fewer environmental regulations and higher carbon emissions footprints.

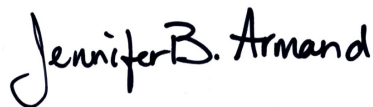
Ensuring access in the Gulf of Mexico, via annual lease sales for energy, and protecting the ability to produce on those leases without political intervention, is critical to the nation's energy security and continued economic growth. Additionally, these vital revenues will assist local, state and national economies hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our economies have suffered greatly and governments at all levels face massive budget shortfalls that will impact funding for schools, emergency services, and other key services. Ensuring access to offshore energy and the important revenue and jobs that the industry creates has never been more important to our states, municipalities, workers, small businesses and families.

Under current law, the Gulf States of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas receive a percentage of revenue from oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico. These funds are used for hurricane protection, wetland conservation, and coastal restoration, which here in our Bayou Region, are critical to our community's survivability and sustainability.

For Fiscal Year 2019 alone, Louisiana received over \$155 million for dedicated coastal projects from revenues generated by the healthy Gulf of Mexico offshore oil and gas industry. It is vital that we secure this funding source to preserve and protect our valuable and irreplaceable coast.

Bayou Industrial Group urges Congress to approve legislation that directs the Department of the Interior to protect current and future energy development on available acreage in this established production basin.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer B. Armand". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Armand, Executive Director
Bayou Industrial Group