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Interior Secretary Ken Salazar's stalls domestic offshore development

WASHINGTON – American Petroleum Institute President Jack Gerard today issued the following statement on Interior Secretary Ken Salazar's announcement that he would extend the Outer Continental Shelf Five-Year Plan comment period by 180 days:

"Congress made the American people wait nearly 30 years to address our immediate energy challenges. Secretary Salazar today told the American people they must continue to wait – even though more than two-thirds of them want to tap our vast domestic resources for the benefit of all Americans.

The accelerated Outer Continental Shelf five-year plan process, which the secretary placed on hold today, was designed to address the critical energy concerns facing Americans. The draft plan already received a record 120,000 comments from states, environmental groups, industry, labor groups and members of the public – with 87,000 of those comments supporting expanded and expeditious development.

Secretary Salazar's announcement means that development of our offshore resources could be stalled indefinitely. That would delay Americans' access to nearly 160,000 new, well-paying jobs, \$1.7 trillion in revenues to federal, state and local governments and greater energy security.

We share Secretary Salazar's view that America needs a comprehensive energy policy that includes alternatives. In these tough economic times, Salazar's delay does a disservice to all Americans. We should be moving as quickly as possible to develop more of our own oil and natural gas to benefit all Americans."

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