

Offshore Drilling: A False Answer to Energy Prices

I've been an oil man all my life, but this is one emergency we can't drill our way out of.
- T. Boone Pickens, 2008

Drilling will not lead to energy independence.

- The amount of oil available offshore (in the Atlantic and Eastern Gulf) would only last the United States about 13 months at present rates of consumption.
- The United States is responsible for 24% of total global oil consumption, but we only provide 6% of total world oil production and hold only 2.5% of the world's oil reserves.
- The United States imports more than two-thirds of our daily oil needs.

Drilling will not lower gas prices.

- The Department of Energy says it will take nearly a decade for new offshore wells to come online. Peak production from any new offshore leases would not be reached until 2030.
- Over the past eight years, drilling permits for oil companies have increased more than 361% while the price of gasoline has doubled.
- The price of oil is based on the international market, so additional oil from offshore drilling would have an insignificant effect on prices here at home. With only 2 to 3% of global oil reserves, the United States cannot significantly affect global oil supply or prices.

Drilling is dirty and unsafe.

- Each year, U.S. drilling operations spill an average of 880,000 gallons of oil into the ocean. More drilling would mean more oil spills, and the new leases would be near shores that are critical to the livelihoods of millions who work in the tourism industry.
- In 2005, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita destroyed 113 oil platforms, damaged 457 pipelines, and spilled 9 million gallons of petroleum products in the Gulf of Mexico.

Drilling will create more global warming pollution.

- More offshore drilling won't decrease our dependence on foreign oil or lower prices at the pump, but using that oil will generate more than 340 million tons of additional carbon dioxide, the main type of global warming pollution.

Let's drill for solutions not for oil.

- Drilling for more oil only feeds our addiction. Instead of scrambling for another dose, we need to find meaningful solutions that will solve the problem and transition us to a low carbon transportation system.
- **Increase fuel economy:** Each mile-per-gallon increase in national CAFE standards saves 420,000 barrels of oil per day. Increasing CAFE standards to 35 mpg by 2015 and 50 mpg by 2030 will save more than 10 million barrels of oil each day by mid-century. These fuel savings will decrease global warming pollution by 1.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide per year.
- **Develop sustainable biofuels:** Advanced biofuel sources like woody biomass and switchgrass can sustainably produce 300-1000 gallons of fuel per acre. These dedicated energy crops can provide alternative fuels that won't affect food prices and will keep money in our local economies.
- **Develop Advanced Transportation:** Shifting away from liquid fuels and diversifying our transportation options, plug-in hybrids can get up to 100 miles per gallon of gas and reduce greenhouse gas emissions at least 27% per car.

Southern Alliance for Clean Energy is a nonprofit organization that promotes responsible energy choices that create global warming solutions and ensure clean, safe, and healthy communities throughout the Southeast.

For more information, go to: www.cleanenergy.org