



July 18, 2014

Ms. Kelly Hammerle
Five Year Program Manager
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (HM-3120)
381 Elden Street
Herndon, Virginia 20170

Dear Ms. Hammerle:

I am writing today on behalf of Palmetto Agribusiness Council (PABC), to request that South Carolina be allowed to take advantage of a potential economic engine, offshore drilling for natural gas and oil. South Carolina, like other states located along the Atlantic coast, has an opportunity to contribute to our nation's energy supply stability as well as increase our state's revenues. PABC requests that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management include the areas of the Atlantic OCS in the 2017 – 2022 Five Year Program for oil and gas leasing and development.

Our organization has been an integral part of the energy conversation in South Carolina since our founding and that includes playing an active role in studying and advancing the potential for offshore energy development. In 2012, PABC co-sponsored an economic impact study, conducted by economist Dr. Harry Miley, that demonstrated the potential for \$2.3 billion in annual economic activity from a combination of gas, oil and a natural gas production facility with up to 7,700 on going jobs, and other published studies have shown great potential in other areas of the Atlantic. PABC has testified at state and federal agency hearings on this subject and worked with both our US senators as they developed legislation to expedite this process. We are naturally encouraged that your agency is now prepared to finally consider an economic opportunity for South Carolina that we believe is long overdue.

All businesses, consumers and agriculture would benefit from a greater supply of domestically produced fuel strengthening America's energy security and keeping energy costs under control. For South Carolina's agribusiness and farming, we are developing strategies to increase the economic impact of our industry, which contributes \$34 billion to the state's economy and provides 200,000 jobs. If we are to sustain and expand our industry, we must find solutions to surging energy costs that have the potential of putting us out of business at the expense of consumers.

Food harvesting, production and transportation are heavily dependent on energy. Exploration of many fuel alternatives can serve to assist us in

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finding ways to reduce the cost of food to consumers and discourage the importing of foods that are not as tightly regulated and therefore not as safe as what we can produce here in our own back yards.

We encourage you to help put South Carolina in the queue for offshore drilling potential in the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf.

Thank you for your consideration of South Carolina's agribusiness in the development of the next Five Year Program.

Sincerely,



Cathy B. Novinger
Executive Director

/sb

Cc: The Honorable Lindsey Graham, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Tim Scott, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Nikki Haley, Governor of South Carolina
The Honorable Jeff Duncan, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Trey Gowdy, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Mick Mulvaney, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Joe Wilson, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Tom Rice, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Jim Clyburn, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Mark Sanford, U.S. House of Representatives