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Begich Statement on Arctic OCS Leasing Program

U.S. Sen. Mark Begich released the following statement after Interior Secretary Ken Salazar made comments from Norway about next steps for U.S. Arctic exploration:

“Today’s announcement about the importance of oil and gas exploration in the Arctic OCS, including the final five-year OCS leasing program, reflects another vote of confidence in Alaska’s OCS prospects. We’re still moving forward.

“For over three years, my message to the Obama Administration is that as America’s energy storehouse, Alaska can and should responsibly supply a significant portion of our country’s energy needs.

“Today’s announcement about the 2012-2017 leasing program, to be released later this week, shows they’re receiving that message. With the future of the leasing program squared away, I will be working on ensuring we have all the tools to transition from successful exploration to responsible production.

“That includes good science and monitoring programs, coordinated agency action, revenue sharing for the state and local communities, job training programs for Alaskans, and a serious look at how we safely bring oil ashore via pipelines through the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.”

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