

Drilling Bill Included In Tax/Health Package

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Jo Bonner (R-AL) today announced passage of legislation that would expand domestic offshore oil and natural gas production in the Gulf of Mexico and allow Alabama and three other coastal states to share part of the federal revenues generated.

“With the 109th Congress quickly drawing to a close, the opportunity to increase oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico was fleeting,” Bonner said. “There are no easy answers to our energy needs, but opening the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) to drilling will benefit the entire country. As far as I’m concerned, we could not go home without passing the OCS bill, as it will limit our dependency on foreign resources. Additionally, this legislation will bring a great deal of revenue to the state of Alabama.”

The Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006, H.R. 6111, passed the House Friday by a vote of 367-45. The bipartisan measure will open energy production in approximately 8 million acres of the Gulf of Mexico. Drilling would be restricted to at least 125 miles off of Alabama’s coast.

“At a time when energy prices are fluctuating, we cannot allow America’s offshore oil and

natural gas leases to remain unused,” Bonner said today. “It is good to end this Congress on a positive note.”

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