

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 8, 2021

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C. St, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

Louisiana has the second-largest refining capacity in the country and is one of the top energy-producing states – including our robust offshore oil and gas sector. The impacts of Hurricane Ida have caused significant damages and disruptions to energy production and fuel supplies across south Louisiana but could have national implications. Several of our refineries experienced severe impacts such as the loss of electricity, shutdown of pipelines, navigation channel closures, pipeline leakage from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve which hindered crude supply, and many others. Further, an estimated 90 percent of the offshore energy produced in the Gulf of Mexico continues to be shut-in, or not flowing resulting from the storm's impacts. Just yesterday, in cities like New Orleans and Baton Rouge, nearly 70 percent of our fueling stations were unable to provide gasoline or diesel.

Significant disruptions from Hurricane Ida have limited fuel supplies across south Louisiana and the shortage continues to inflict harm on everyday Americans. Fuel supplies are so limited that our constituents have reported waiting over eight hours, sometimes sleeping in their cars while in line, to refuel their vehicles or even to fill gas tanks for generators to keep life-saving machines powered.

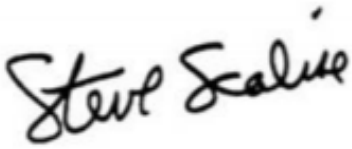
We appreciate the Biden Administration authorizing a release of oil from the U.S. Department of Energy's Strategic Petroleum Reserve (now impacted by the aforementioned leak), but more action is required. We have strong concerns about the impact of this shut-in on already constrained fuel supplies in Louisiana – and nationally. History suggests there is potential for national price and supply implications. In 2005, following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, national gasoline prices spiked \$.75 per gallon. In 2008, the impacts of Hurricane Gustav and Ike resulted in spikes of up to \$1.40 per gallon. While we recognize that our domestic production of energy has increased since that time, it is important to note that post-Hurricane Ida production estimates indicate a loss of 1,600,000 barrels a day for over 10 days.

By comparison, this is approximately a 32 percent greater loss when compared to the 2005 hurricanes and a 42 percent higher loss compared to the 2008 storms. We urge you to work with producers to expedite efforts to resume domestic energy production in the Gulf of Mexico as quickly as possible.

Based on history, any delay in resuming outer Continental Shelf production will result in two outcomes: higher gasoline prices for motorists across the country, and greater dependence on Vladimir Putin to supply energy to the United States. Obviously, neither of these outcomes are advisable or desirable. We believe they are also preventable. Considering the Biden Administration's policies that have already increased dependence on foreign energy from Russia and other countries that do not share America's values, we strongly urge you to work with producers to expedite efforts to reopen domestic energy production in the Gulf of Mexico.

We look forward to your quick action to resume the outer Continental Shelf production so Americans can be back at work, health care remains available, and people, goods and services can keep moving. Your action can power our nation's economy with affordable domestic energy from the Gulf of Mexico rather than West Siberia or the Urals-Volga areas in Russia or the Middle East.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Scalise". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Steve Scalise  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Garret Graves". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Garret Graves  
Member of Congress