



LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

November 18, 2013

United States House
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Oppose the Big Oil Giveaway: H.R. 1965, H.R. 2728, and H.R. 1900

Dear Representative:

The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) works to turn environmental values into national priorities. Each year, LCV publishes the *National Environmental Scorecard*, which details the voting records of members of Congress on environmental legislation. The *Scorecard* is distributed to LCV members, concerned voters nationwide, and the media.

LCV urges you to vote NO on a trio of bills comprising the Big Oil Giveaway, which are being considered on the House floor this week: H.R. 1965, the so-called Federal Lands Jobs and Energy Security Act; H.R. 2728, the misnamed Protecting States' Rights to Promote American Energy Security Act; and HR 1900, the so-called Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act. These bills are nothing more than giveaways to the oil and gas industry. They prioritize industry profits at the expense of the public's interest in participating in government decision-making on energy projects in our backyards, improving the health and safety of our communities, and maintaining access to enjoy our public lands and preserving them for our children and grandchildren.

These pieces of legislation ignore the reality that the United States is in the midst of a massive energy boom, which is impacting our lands, waterways, and climate. Indeed, these bills come at a time when the United States is the top natural gas producer in the world, domestic crude oil production has reached its highest level in 25 years, nearly 38 million acres of federal lands are already under lease for oil and gas, and 7,000 drilling permits have been issued by the Bureau of Land Management that have gone unused by industry. Rather than focusing on further enriching an industry that is contributing to climate-change-fueled extreme weather, Congress should instead embrace the moral responsibility we have to future generations to address climate change and protect our natural heritage.

- **H.R. 1965** would force the federal government to prioritize drilling on our public lands over other activities in these beautiful and majestic places, such as hunting, fishing, and hiking. The recent government shutdown highlighted the extent to which the public treasures our national parks and other public lands as a legacy we pass on to our children and grandchildren. Yet, as the administration has noted, this legislation would “direct Federal land managers to manage lands for the primary purpose of energy development.” Such a mandate subverts the multiple uses these lands have historically been managed for, and it would harm businesses that comprise our \$646 billion outdoor recreation economy.



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- **H.R. 2728** would jeopardize our public lands by prohibiting the federal government from setting baseline protections from hydraulic fracturing if a state has even minimal, unenforceable guidelines in place for fracking. This giveaway of our public lands would place fracking oversight under a patchwork of inadequate state regulations and prioritize oil and gas development over recreation, wildlife habitat, and wildland protection. H.R. 2728 would also delay EPA's Congressionally-mandated study on the impacts of hydrofracking on drinking water, keeping important information on contamination from families with oil and gas drilling in their backyards.
- **H.R. 1900** imposes strict, one-size-fits-all permitting deadlines, which severely limit public participation in the pipeline permitting process and allow pipeline companies to more easily acquire private land without adequate review using eminent domain authority. The bill forces agencies to comply with unreasonable deadlines—one year for FERC and three months for other permitting agencies including the EPA—to issue decisions on permit applications, no matter how complex the proposal or the risks the pipeline could pose to lives and property. Any failure to issue a decision would result in an automatic approval of the permit.

We urge you to REJECT H.R. 1965, H.R. 2728, and H.R. 1900. We will strongly consider including votes on these bills in the 2013 Scorecard. If you need more information, please call Tiernan Sittenfeld, Sara Chieffo or Alex Taurel in my office at (202) 785-8683.

Sincerely,

Gene Karpinski
President