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## **Murkowski Advances Legislation Critical to Alaska's Future** *Energy Panel Passes Broad, Bipartisan Bill and Revenue Sharing for Coastal States*

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, today thanked her colleagues on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee for supporting her broad, bipartisan energy legislation and a separate measure she introduced to grant Alaska and other coastal states a share of the revenue from offshore oil and gas activity.



Click photo for video of business meeting

“Alaska’s natural resources are vital to our prosperity,” Murkowski said. “With exploration proceeding in the Chukchi Sea, and the Alaska offshore emerging as a key part of our national energy security, it’s critical that we ensure revenue sharing for the state and coastal communities and invest in the workforce development, science and infrastructure necessary to bring these vast resources to market.”

The committee on Thursday approved the [Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015](#), which chairman Murkowski crafted with ranking member Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., by a vote of 18 to 4. A total of 10 Republicans and eight Democrats voted to advance the bill to the Senate for consideration.

The committee also voted 12-10 to approve Murkowski’s [Offshore Production and National](#)

[Security Act](#) (OPENS), which would ensure Alaska and other coastal states receive a fair share of the revenue from oil and gas activity off their shores. The bill would also lift the outdated ban on exporting most U.S. crude oil.

“These are both national bills, but they’re also Alaska bills. As a result of our work here on the committee, this has turned into one of Alaska’s best weeks on federal energy policy in years,” said Murkowski. “I’m very proud of what we’ve accomplished, and just as proud of how we’ve accomplished it.



*Sen. Lisa Murkowski speaks with staff of the energy committee Thursday afternoon. Click photo for audio of Murkowski’s press conference.*

The OPENS Act is a combination of four bills previously considered by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and addresses the different interests of the Gulf states, Atlantic states and Alaska, as well as crude oil exports.

The legislation would ensure that America’s energy renaissance continues by opening additional areas of America’s offshore to responsible oil and gas exploration; allowing our nation’s crude oil to be exported; and ensuring coastal states share in the revenues from offshore production to offset the impacts of development.

Alaska’s OCS in the Beaufort and Chukchi seas are estimated to contain undiscovered resources of 23.6 billion barrels of oil and 104.4 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Additionally, Cook Inlet, which provides the natural gas supply for southcentral and interior Alaska, contains an estimated undiscovered resource of 19 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

Murkowski’s legislation would provide for revenue sharing in the Alaska OCS region for the state and coastal communities. It would also increase access to additional resources by requiring a minimum of three lease sales in each of the Beaufort, Chukchi, and Cook Inlet planning areas during any five-year period, as well as annual lease sales in the 8(g) zone of the Beaufort and Cook Inlet planning areas.

“The OPENS Act will ensure that the state of Alaska and coastal communities supporting development will receive a substantial share of the revenues from production to compensate for

impacts from development,” Murkowski said.

In addition to the broad energy bill and the OPENS Act, the committee approved 15 bills at the conclusion of Thursday’s business meeting. One of those measures was Murkowski’s [legislation](#) to honor former Alaska Gov. Jay Hammond by naming the 2.6 million-acre wilderness area in Lake Clark National Park and Preserve for him.

The committee’s business meeting agenda is available on our [website](#).

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