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JOE BIDEN · Published August 17, 2022 9:32am EDT

Biden approves largest oil, gas lease sale in US history, steamrolls eco review with inflation bill

The Inflation Reduction Act reinstates Lease Sale 257, an oil and gas sale spanning 80.8 million acres across the Gulf of Mexico

By **Thomas Catenacci** | FOXBusiness

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President Biden reinstated the largest oil and gas lease sale in U.S. history, essentially steamrolling the need for environmental review, [by signing the Inflation Reduction Act](#) into law on Tuesday.

While the Inflation Reduction Act includes several green energy provisions opposed by the fossil fuel industry, the bill also orders the Department of the Interior (DOI) to take a series of steps to boost fossil fuel production on federal lands and waters. The legislation specifically requires the DOI to reinstate Lease Sale 257, a massive offshore oil and gas sale spanning 80.8 million acres across the Gulf of Mexico, within 30 days of enactment.

"There should be no questions about the issuance of leases from Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 257," National Ocean Industries Association President Erik Milito told FOX Business in a statement Tuesday. "The legislation is clear and mandatory."

"Congress has acted, the leases must be issued and the lawsuit must be dismissed," he continued.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION UNVEILS OIL AND GAS DRILLING PLANS, GUTTING TRUMP-ERA FRAMEWORK

By signing the Inflation Reduction Act, President Biden reinstated Lease Sale 257, the largest oil and gas lease sale in U.S. history. (Getty Images/iStock)

In November, the DOI held the lease sale, which generated more than \$191 million in bids for 308 tracts from fossil fuel companies despite criticism from several prominent Democratic lawmakers and environmental groups. However, a federal court blocked the sale in January, ruling in favor of a coalition led by Friends of the Earth and the Sierra Club that argued the Biden administration failed to properly analyze the climate impacts of the sale.

The Biden administration opted against appealing the court's decision in March. The American Petroleum Institute (API), a group representing large segments of the fossil fuel industry, intervened and appealed on behalf of the companies involved in the sale. The case remains before a federal appeals panel.

CLIMATE WARRIOR DEMS SILENT ON MANCHIN BILL'S OIL AND GAS LEASING PROVISIONS

"While reinstating Lease Sale 257 is a positive step forward for American energy leadership, the legislation as a whole falls well short of addressing America's long-term energy needs," Frank Macchiarola, API's senior vice president of policy, economics and regulatory affairs, told FOX Business in a statement.

The API and several other industry groups penned a letter to House leadership last week urging them to reconsider the legislation. The groups took particular issue with the corporate minimum tax, natural gas tax and tax on crude oil included in the bill.

House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., and other Democratic lawmakers who have criticized fossil fuel leasing voted for the Inflation Reduction Act. (Bonnie Cash/Pool/AFP via Getty Images / Getty Images)

In addition, several prominent Democrats who previously slammed new fossil fuel leasing on federal lands and waters voted in favor of the Inflation Reduction Act despite their criticism of Lease Sale 257.

"After this disastrous lease sale was rightfully revoked, the Biden administration had a clear choice to make," House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., said in March after the administration chose not to appeal the court ruling blocking Lease Sale 257. "Would they appeal the decision and continue to defend the previous administration's climate denialism and massive giveaways to the fossil fuel industry? Or would they accept the ruling, follow federal environmental law and seize this rare opportunity to realign the Interior Department's offshore leasing program with climate science?

"Thankfully, the administration made the right decision."

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The Inflation Reduction Act also requires the Biden administration to hold three offshore lease sales it had canceled in May and ties new renewable energy leasing to mandated onshore oil and gas leasing.

The DOI declined to comment.

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1A2A · 5 hours ago

It will be years before these leases become productive enough to impact the price of fuel. The XL pipeline is closer to completion and presents less environmental impact, so why wasn't it re-activated?

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B bruinsfan4ever · 4 hours ago

The Keystone extension will only provide a new way to get existing oil to market. This lease provides another source of oil.

Don't get me wrong. I prefer pipelines to other methods of transporting oil (like rail cars).

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I itstimetothink · 4 hours ago

Just kinda like our border wall, the material is there....the government just needs to allow the companies to finish it but instead Biden is paying them to NOT work on the wall.

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↳ 21 replies

2 2018chief760 · 8 minutes ago

Because a guy with a gourd for a head is running the government.

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moosepucker619 · 8 minutes ago

Because the oil being transported now is being transported by Warren Buffet Railroad. Follow the money.

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rocketdan022 · 4 hours ago

None of the leases offered by this administration are more than election year theater. They will never allow the necessary drilling permits or permits to build needed roads, pipelines and supporting structures. Without these the leases are meaningless. This is just designed as an election year fake...[See more](#)

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pcbskillsourculture · 3 hours ago

Exactly. This is not only the largest gas lease/sale in US history but is also the largest Political Posturing scam in US history. Those permits will never in a million years get approved. The same agencies stifling drilling now are the same one's that will oversee future permits. What a scam for ...[See more](#)

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w whitetrump99 · 3 hours ago
Trying to buy votes.

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G groovenc · 4 hours ago ...

Don't be fooled. Just because the leases are being sold, it doesn't mean they will be developed until the regulations that this Administration has placed on the industry are rolled back. It still needs to be profitable for the oil companies to proceed with development, and that is simply not the ...[See more](#)

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s stelmo984 · 2 hours ago ...

That is especially true with offshore. The engineering and construction costs are very high and the oil companies are not going to go through the time and expense if the money isn't there.

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I i-post-only-the-truth · 3 hours ago ...

He knows they will never produce.

The environmental agencies will sue for the next 100 years to keep them from being used. It's just all part of the democratic lies and misinformation.

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c commonsense999999141 · 4 hours ago ...

Give the leases with one hand while the other hand behind his back is raising taxes and placing regulatory burdens that will hinder development. Even if oil and gas is discovered it will take 5 plus years before it hits the market. Deepwater GOM drilling isn't cheap either so there has to be a big ...[See more](#)

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M merit4goodlife · 3 hours ago ...

Leases are leases. Leases serve no purpose produce oil until PERMITS are issued. Don't hold your breath that Biden will announce any PERMITS in the near future.

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y yourlowiqisshowing · 3 hours ago ...

Sleepy joe will appoint Hunter to oversee the agency to make sure that oil companies pony up their 10% before actual drilling begins

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★ ★ ★ letstrythisagain ★ ★ • 4 hours ago

People that think this is going to lead to more drilling are delusional. It's easy to sell leases but when you intentionally drag out the permit process and put new regulations in place that may actually prevent the drilling then it's all for show. One of the things Biden is carrying through on is ...[See more](#)

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c credi • 4 hours ago

Totally agree. Also, are there any provisions in the lease sale that only let USA companies bid on the leases?? If not, there should be! Hopefully Joe's buddies in China won't be bidding on these leases!!

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302agent • 3 hours ago

At least the ability to drill is there. Once we take over in 2022 and 2024, we will go back to sanity and common sense. Don't look at now, it's a marathon, not a sprint.

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R richard-f • 4 hours ago

One has to question why this change of direction so close to the midterm elections. The same or similar happened before 2020 election, and the spots came back on the leopard afterward.

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L littlered480 • 2 hours ago

Yep gas prices have come down lately too but will go right back up again probably even higher after the election.

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B B.E.F. • 3 hours ago

Political trick to get votes Democrats do it all the time

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c californiareason • 1 minute ago

You need to be "transitioned" by those better than you, like John Kerry and Leo DiCaprio.

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CounterRev22 • 4 hours ago

What will they, the Democrats, do to make this move all for show before the election and then pull the rug out from under the fuel industry afterward? They can't be trusted. None of them.

Has anyone noticed the price of stocks operates inversely to price of fossil fuel? (Edited)

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tryandmakesense • 4 hours ago

They did that before. Sold the leases, then wouldn't let them use them.

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B.E.F. • 4 hours ago

Just a trick to get votes in November

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JDLLogic295 • 8 minutes ago

It's a failed effort. This will really infuriate the greens, who are Biden's base. Meanwhile, it won't cause any conservative to vote for a Dem.

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s **sentidocomun598** • 4 hours ago

Won't work because most oil and gas companies just don't trust them to make the massive investments that are required. The leftists/democrats will come in through the back door with all kinds of restrictions, regulations, fees/taxes.

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wizard301398 • 4 hours ago

You're SPOT on! You overlooked noting that some cities are already blocking any new gas station construction. They're attacking the distribution channel, so it won't matter if you drill because there won't be a channel to sell it.

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I **IndependentTN63** • 23 minutes ago

Under Trump, drilling went down for 20 consecutive months in 2019 & 2020 including 15 straight months BEFORE the pandemic. 107 American oil companies went bankrupt, 91,000 American oil workers lost their jobs and 6 major American refineries shut down in 2019 & 2020 under Trump. Under Biden, the Ame...[See more](#)

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blueisthenewblack • 4 hours ago

Nothing but a ploy. They know they could get votes for the abomination bill by adding in the oil and gas leasing to please manchin. They ALSO know that when lease time comes, eco groups will tie it

all up in courts for years and years so it will never actually come to fruition. Once again, kabu...[See more](#)

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 3 replies

ddr215 · 4 hours ago

...

So theres a corporate tax, a natural gas tax, and a crude oil tax included in this bill, but its going to reduce the cost of our energy bills. I seriously doubt that.

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