

Sixtieth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4001**

Introduced by

Senators Seymour, Heitkamp, Wardner

Representatives Boucher, Headland, Thorpe

1 A concurrent resolution urging the President and Congress to make the nation's outer  
2 continental shelf available for energy development in an environmentally responsible manner.

3 **WHEREAS**, policies of the federal government have placed much of the nation's outer  
4 continental shelf off-limits to oil and natural gas production; and

5 **WHEREAS**, development of oil and natural gas resources, where allowed offshore, has  
6 coexisted for decades with recreational and commercial activities while benefiting the entire  
7 nation; and

8 **WHEREAS**, America's increased dependence on foreign energy supplies and global  
9 competition for oil and natural gas creates a threat to our national security; and

10 **WHEREAS**, United States energy use is growing twice as fast as United States energy  
11 production, and as a result natural gas prices have increased 140 percent and oil prices have  
12 increased 107 percent since 2000; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the Department of Energy forecasts the annual average price for natural  
14 gas will rise 10 percent in 2007; and

15 **WHEREAS**, rising energy costs are taking a toll on families throughout the nation;  
16 according to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, 32 percent of families had  
17 to sacrifice medical care, 24 percent of families failed to make their rent or mortgage payment,  
18 20 percent of families were without food for at least a day, and 44 percent of families skipped  
19 paying or only partially paid their home energy bill in the past year; and

20 **WHEREAS**, applications for the low-income home energy assistance program in 2006  
21 reached almost 5.8 million households last year, the highest level in the last 13 years, with  
22 applications up an average of 12 percent, while nine states reported increases of at least  
23 25 percent; and

1           **WHEREAS**, the nation's farming and ranching sectors depend on a reliable and  
2 affordable supply of energy to run equipment, fertilize crops, and transport products to market;  
3 and

4           **WHEREAS**, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, over the past  
5 three years increases in the fuel prices paid index have averaged 31 percent, and higher  
6 energy prices mean increased costs to farmers and ranchers, who already face tremendous  
7 economic challenges; and

8           **WHEREAS**, farmers' fuel, oil, and electricity expenditures have increased from  
9 \$8.6 billion to \$11.5 billion since 1999 according to the United States Department of Agriculture;  
10 these increases led to a \$4.5 billion decline in the United States fertilizer industry, which uses  
11 natural gas as a raw material to produce nitrogen fertilizer; and 36 percent of the United States  
12 fertilizer industry has been shutdown or mothballed since 2002; and

13           **WHEREAS**, in spite of significant progress in energy efficiency, the United States will  
14 still need 32 percent more energy to support economic growth by 2025; and

15           **WHEREAS**, inland states such as North Dakota are doing more to increase domestic oil  
16 and gas production, in 2005 North Dakota was the ninth largest oil-producing state, totaling  
17 35.6 million barrels, while the state's natural gas production was more than 58 billion cubic feet;  
18 and

19           **WHEREAS**, North Dakota is cooperating with federal agencies in coordinating energy  
20 production on public lands that lie within state borders in an effort to better meet the energy  
21 needs of all Americans; and

22           **WHEREAS**, North Dakota's public lands have more than 1,500 federal oil and gas  
23 leases covering more than 814,000 acres and these public lands produced more than 6 million  
24 barrels of oil and more than 7.3 billion cubic feet of natural gas in 2005, generating almost  
25 \$35 million in federal oil and gas royalties; and

26           **WHEREAS**, public lands that lie off the nation's coasts also hold enormous potential for  
27 energy production, which could significantly help meet the energy needs of all Americans; and

28           **WHEREAS**, the United States outer continental shelf is conservatively estimated to hold  
29 over 419 trillion cubic feet of technically recoverable natural gas and 86 billion barrels of  
30 technically recoverable oil; and

1           **WHEREAS**, as this nation seizes the challenge of increasing domestic energy  
2 production, it is important to remember that those public lands that lie off our nation's coasts  
3 hold enormous potential for energy production, which could significantly help to meet the  
4 energy needs of all Americans;

5           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE**  
6 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:**

7           That the Sixtieth Legislative Assembly urges the President and the Congress of the  
8 United States to make the nation's outer continental shelf available for energy development in  
9 an environmentally responsible manner; and

10          **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the President revoke administrative withdrawals on  
11 offshore energy development on the nation's outer continental shelf to provide needed energy  
12 resources to the United States; and

13          **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Secretary of State forward copies of this  
14 resolution to the President of the United States, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the  
15 House of Representatives, the United States Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Energy,  
16 and to each member of the North Dakota Congressional Delegation.