

**Sixtieth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Wednesday, January 3, 2007**

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 4001
(Senators Seymour, Heitkamp, Wardner)
(Representatives Boucher, Headland, Thorpe)

A concurrent resolution urging the President and Congress to make the entire nation available for energy development in an environmentally responsible manner.

WHEREAS, the oil and gas industry has demonstrated that onshore and offshore oil and natural gas resources can be developed in an environmentally responsible manner; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has shown great potential for oil and natural gas production; and

WHEREAS, as this nation seizes the challenge of increasing domestic energy production, it is important to remember that those public lands that lie off our nation's coasts and in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge hold enormous potential for energy production, which could significantly help to meet the energy needs of all Americans;

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

That the Sixtieth Legislative Assembly urges the President and the Congress of the United States to make the entire nation available for energy development in an environmentally responsible manner; and

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

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

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

Secretary of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 2007,
at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State