



## This week in gas wars

By: [Conn Carroll](#) | *Senior Editorial Writer* | 05/03/11 9:34 AM

Before Osama bin Laden was killed Sunday, the House and Senate were scheduled to have votes on vastly different responses to the nation's high gas prices. After his death, those votes are still on.

The House will vote on two bills: the [Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act \(H.R. 1230\)](#) and the [Putting the Gulf Back to Work Act \(H.R. 1229\)](#). Here is how the House Committee on Natural Resources [describes](#) the bills:

H.R. 1230, the Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act, passed the Committee with bipartisan support. It would require the Administration to move forward promptly to conduct offshore lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico and offshore Virginia that the Obama Administration has delayed or canceled.

H.R. 1229, the Putting the Gulf Back to Work Act, passed the Committee with bipartisan support. It would end the Administration's de facto moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico in a safe, responsible, transparent manner by setting firm time-lines for considering permits to drill. It reforms current law by requiring the Secretary to issue a permit to drill and also requiring the Secretary to conduct a safety review.

Meanwhile, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid is still promising a vote to [“repeal of subsidies for oil companies.”](#) The number \$4 billion has been thrown about, and [there are some bills in the Senate out there](#), but it is unclear what exact legislation Reid will bring to a vote.

It is unclear how the Democrats will try to claim that removing oil company drilling subsidies will lower the price of gas, but conservatives are eager to highlight all the domestic oil production the Obama administration is passing up. [The National Center for Policy Analysis released a study last week finding:](#)

A year after the tragic April 20, 2010, explosion of the Deepwater Horizon oil drilling rig, the federal government is still slowing new offshore oil and gas exploration and production. As a result, the U.S. Energy Information Administration projects a decline of 240,000 barrels per day in oil production from the Gulf of Mexico this year. That represents billions of dollars in potential revenue that could help close the federal deficit.