



**IPAMS**  
**Independent**  
**Petroleum**  
**Association**  
**of**  
**Mountain**  
**States**

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August 22, 2008

Hon. Patricia Madrid  
Hon. Judith McHale  
Gov. Deval Patrick  
Democratic National Convention Committee, Inc.  
1560 Broadway, Suite 400  
Denver, Colorado 80202

Dear Chairpersons Madrid, McHale, and Patrick,

On behalf of the independent oil and natural gas producers of the Intermountain West, the Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States (IPAMS) welcomes you, Senator Obama, and all of the delegates to Denver. We are pleased that you have chosen our city for this historic event, and look forward to an open, honest discussion on America's energy future.

While you enjoy the Mile High City and all the Rocky Mountains have to offer, please keep in mind that our region plays a critical role in meeting America's energy challenge. The independent energy companies of the Intermountain West currently produce 25% of our nation's natural gas while occupying less than 1% of federal lands. Further policy choices to restrict access to public lands in this region will have far-reaching effects on American consumers and businesses who are already struggling with high energy prices.

Recent inaccurate claims have diverted the public's attention from the need to develop more domestic energy and led many to believe that companies are purposely not developing on the federal lands they currently have leased. Companies are doing all they can to develop federal energy resources, but a lease is not a green light to drill—it's the first step in a long, expensive process that is fraught with bureaucratic red tape, protests, and lawsuits. In fact, this year 100% of BLM lease sales in our region have been protested. We hope that you will consider including provisions in your platform that call on policymakers to enable companies to develop more energy on federal leases by addressing the current problems that make development on non-park, non-wilderness public lands a lengthy and uncertain process.

Recent polling data has shown that the vast majority of Americans (67%) support increased drilling for domestic energy. While we are encouraged that many leaders in the Democratic Party, including Senator Obama, Speaker Pelosi, and Congressman Udall, are beginning to acknowledge the value of increased domestic drilling, we hope the party leadership will back up their recent statements and include in your platform a call for Congress to pass legislation that will ensure government agencies issue permits within reasonable timeframes and curb the abuses of frivolous lawsuits and protests designed to slow natural gas development. Exploring for oil and natural gas in new areas is a responsible step, but enabling companies to develop more energy from federal lands already leased would mean real progress as America tries to meet its near term energy needs.

(more)

We realize that many activists within your party want to see an end to domestic energy development. As Kathy Kilmer of the Wilderness Society said yesterday, "After eight years of fending off the oil industry, it would be heartbreaking to lose ground in the waning days of the Bush administration." We doubt the Wilderness Society speaks for the 1 in 5 Americans who already need help paying their utility bills and are all but certain to see increased energy costs this winter. Isn't it time to hold those groups who are blocking development on federal land accountable when their actions—in the form of frivolous lawsuits and protests—are placing such a heavy burden on American families and businesses?

As you lead your party in crafting a platform, we hope you will call on those of us who are exploring for and producing clean, reliable, and abundant natural gas to assist you in creating a vision for our future. The independent natural gas producers of the Rocky Mountain West stand ready to help.

To learn more about IPAMS and how natural gas is the bridge to America's energy future, please visit [ipams.org](http://ipams.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc W. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Marc W. Smith  
Executive Director