

Senator Bennett Tries to Make a Silk Purse Out of a Sow's Ear

This would be a better fit: "Bennett Backs Down, Secretary Salazar Stays the Course."

No, it did nothing of the sort (read for yourself). Senator Bennett is just taking a page from the shrill rhetoric of the oil and gas industry.

Nope. Secretary Salazar sent Senator Bennett a letter promising to look into the 77 leases, something the Secretary has said he would do from the beginning. There was no "inaccurate information."

Here is the real meat of the issue. Senator Bennett is backing down on his challenge to the nomination of David Hayes, knowing that the Senate would shortly brush him aside and confirm Mr. Hayes. Senator Bennett is now accepting an offer that Secretary Salazar proposed weeks ago.



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BENNETT SECURES VICTORY ON OIL AND GAS LEASE ISSUE WITH DOI

Department admits it relied on inaccurate information

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senator Bob Bennett (R-Utah) today said the Department of the Interior (DOI) has acknowledged it relied on inaccurate information regarding the 77 oil and gas leases, and has committed to perform a formal review to examine the basis of the secretary's decision when canceling the leases.

"The victory on the Senate floor last week elevated this to a high enough level that the secretary began a personal review of the issue and has admitted that the department relied on inaccurate information," said Bennett, a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. "The Senate has sent a clear message that we will hold the administration to its commitment of pursuing a balanced energy approach, which must include developing our energy resources here at home. I have spoken with the secretary, and he has assured me that the review will be more than a 'check the box' exercise."

"While it's unfortunate that it required a showdown on the Senate floor, it's important that the administration respond in full and in a timely matter to senators' questions on the direction of its energy policy," said Sen. Lisa Murkowski, the ranking Republican on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. "The Obama administration has spoken frequently about taking a balanced approach to energy policy and now it knows that we are serious about holding it to that commitment. I'm now comfortable with the commitment we've gotten from Interior Secretary Salazar and am pleased to be able to release my hold on David Hayes. I look forward to working with him as Under Secretary of the Interior."

Bennett and the department agreed today on a path forward for the review and the confirmation of Mr. Hayes. Secretary Salazar sent Bennett a letter addressing the inaccurate information that the department received and provided a step by step outline of the forthcoming review