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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Rep. Carter misleads public on offshore oil and gas leasing plan

In his recent newsletter sent to coastal Georgia constituents, Rep. Buddy Carter used brazen rationalizations for his remarkably irresponsible and misleading positions.

Foremost in Carter's ambitious, reality-defying rhetoric is his criticism of President Biden's belated update of the offshore leasing plan, because the delay will "undercut conservation projects." He claims that by delaying distribution of funds for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which receives revenues generated by offshore oil and gas leasing, Biden's inaction has harmed worthy conservation and recreation activities.

But Carter fails to acknowledge leasing-plan revisions required by the momentous Inflation Reduction Act [IRA] and related priorities, including assurances to accommodate offshore wind development and minimizing environmental threats linked to future leases for drilling.

Leasing trade-offs required to win Congressional approval of the IRA made some \$370 billion in urgently needed federal funds available for actions essential to reducing the release of heat-trapping emissions by converting to clean energy and improving energy efficiency.

At a time when the U.S. is incurring record-breaking damages caused by burning fossil fuels, including wildfire, flooding, crop-losses, and heat-waves, our representative should be taking steps to curb escalating climate hazards instead of expressing dubious anxieties about delayed funds for conservation projects.

Carter's tenuous complaint indicates either his woefully weak grasp of important legislative provisions or a partisan position contrived to discredit the Democrats, while he also implicitly advances the fossil-fuel industry's agenda.

Given the costly, rapidly accumulating hazards of climate change, coastal Georgia deserves more responsible, uncompromised actions by our public officials.

David Kyler, director, Center for a Sustainable Coast