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## **Online Auctions Bring BLM Up to Date With Technology, Save Taxpayers Money** <sup>[1]</sup>

**DENVER** - [Western Energy Alliance](#) <sup>[2]</sup> applauds the Bureau of Land Management for [implementing online auctions](#) <sup>[3]</sup> of oil and natural gas leases, the first of which will be held September 20, 2016, in Kentucky and Mississippi by BLM's Eastern States Office. The following comments are from Kathleen Sgamma, vice president of government and public affairs at the Alliance:

"We're pleased BLM is moving forward with online oil and natural gas lease auctions to take advantage of well-established technology. Transitioning auctions from in-person to online will enable BLM to meet its obligations under existing law, reduce administrative costs, and eliminate disruptions from Keep-It-in-the-Ground protesters.

"The Mineral Leasing Act requires quarterly sales in all states with federal oil and natural gas resources, yet BLM has failed to meet this requirement several times in the last few years. We sympathize with the pressure BLM is often under from protestors overwhelming available facilities, disrupting sales, and threatening the safety of staff. Online auctions also have cost-savings benefits as venues and security personnel do not have to be enlisted to handle unruly crowds. The public will still have the opportunity to participate at multiple points in the leasing process, but the actual sale will use up-to-date technology that has been around for over a decade since eBay became ubiquitous."

Congress authorized online sales in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015. Western Energy Alliance encouraged BLM to hold auctions online in February after several lease auctions were canceled. The letter is available online at <http://bit.ly/23c4Dq8> <sup>[4]</sup>.

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[3] [http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/newsroom/2016/august/nr\\_08\\_30\\_2016.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/newsroom/2016/august/nr_08_30_2016.html)

[4] <http://bit.ly/23c4Dq8>