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MMS BRIEFS STATE LEGISLATORS ON ENERGY ISSUES (#40017)

The Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) played host to 90 state lawmakers and industry representatives from nine energy producing states and Canada March 7.

The legislators, participants in a meeting of The Energy Council, received briefings on several issues. Those included new oil spill financial responsibility requirements mandated by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, offshore royalty matters, and lease and royalty stipulations. Speaking and answering questions were Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, MMS Director Tom Fry and Dr. F. Eugene Hester, Acting Director of the National Biological Survey.

Interior Department officials, however, didn't do all the talking, according to Fry. "A big part of our job is listening to those we serve," he said, "and our energy-related partnerships with the states make them some of our most important customers." Fry said he asked the lawmakers to share their opinions about Federal energy issues with MMS officials, now and in the future. "We need to have their perception of how well we're doing our job, as well as their ideas on how we can do it better," he said. "A crucial part of reinventing government is making sure that our customers have a strong voice in our decisions."

The briefing was a part of the Energy Council's annual Federal Energy and Environmental Matters Conference, held this year in Washington, D.C. from March 5 - 8.

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