

## NOVEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup> EDITORIAL BOARD/OP-ED PAGE & POLITICS BRIEFER:

### **PRESIDENT OBAMA URGED BY CONGRESS, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF LOCALS FROM MAINE TO FLORIDA TO PERMANENTLY BAN ATLANTIC OFFSHORE DRILLING**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. – November 3, 2016** -- Pressure is building for the Obama Administration to take action now to permanently ban offshore drilling off the U.S. Atlantic Coast. This year alone, thousands of businesses have stepped up to say they do not want offshore oil exploration off the East Coast. Members of Congress, from Maine to Florida, have also called on President Obama to protect the Atlantic Coast and permanently protect it from offshore drilling.

Along the Atlantic coast, nearly 1.4 million jobs and \$95 billion in gross domestic product — mainly through fishing, tourism and recreation — rely on healthy ocean ecosystems. President Obama is currently on the brink of making final decisions about offshore drilling and the use of federal lands and their role in addressing climate change. Such a step would go beyond the current five-year moratorium on offshore Atlantic drilling in firmly addressing climate change and providing meaningful assurances to the communities, fishing families, businesses and others whose fate is tied to the health and vitality of the Atlantic Coast.

Just how widespread is the support for this step that would further cement the environmental legacy of the Obama Administration? Consider this timeline:

- **November 3** – Local community and business leaders from six Atlantic Coast states participate in a news event to urge the Obama White House to permanently ban offshore drilling and exploration. To hear streaming audio from the news event, go to [stopthedrill.org](http://stopthedrill.org) (available after 5 p.m. ET on November 3, 2016). As of today, [120 East Coast municipalities](#) have formally opposed offshore oil exploration and/or development off the Atlantic coast, representing millions of East Coast residents.
- **October 27** – The Business Alliance for Protecting the Atlantic Coast (BAPAC), representing over 12,000 businesses and 400,000 commercial fishing families, [sent a letter to President Obama](#) indicating that the signers want a permanent offshore drilling ban. The letter states the groups “strongly oppose geological and geophysical (G&G) activities in the Atlantic Ocean, including but not limited to seismic airgun testing. Seismic airgun testing threatens our vibrant local coastal economies and is the first step towards dangerous offshore drilling ... In March 2016, the Department of the Interior removed the proposed Atlantic lease sale from the 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Proposed Program. With the Atlantic Ocean withdrawn from the current offshore drilling plans, seismic airgun testing is unnecessary, would significantly impact coastal economies—in particular our commercial fishing and tourism industries—and should not proceed ... Seismic invites offshore drilling and the industrialization of our coast.”
- **October 13** – [The Natural Resources Defense Council and the League of Conservation Voters released survey findings](#) showing that 59 percent of Americans – including 84 percent of Democrats, 63 percent of Independents and 67 percent of millennials – would support permanently protecting the Atlantic Ocean from offshore drilling.
- **October 6** – A group of [14 Democratic Senators delivered a letter to President Obama](#) asking him to permanently protect the Atlantic Ocean from oil and gas drilling. **“Using this authority to permanently protect these areas would ensure that important industries in our coastal states such as fishing and tourism are protected, that we do not despoil our beaches and coastlines...and that we align our long-term federal energy decisions with a climate-safe future.”**
- **September 28** – A [letter from 74 Members of the U.S. House of Representatives](#) is sent to the White House stating: “The United States must continue to lead the fight against global warming not only by committing to clean energy alternatives, but also by closing the door on new, dangerous and environmentally harmful fossil fuel extraction. Protecting the Atlantic and Arctic coastlines against

future oil and gas extraction would send a powerful signal to the world that the United States is fully committed to delivering on our climate commitments. It would help defend our communities and future generations against the health, environmental, and economic impacts of climate change and the possibility of a catastrophic oil spill. Plain and simple, we do not need and we cannot afford to expand drilling into these sensitive areas.”

- **February 16** – Over 360 Atlantic Coast businesses sent a letter urging the Obama Administration to take the Atlantic out of the proposed program for oil and gas drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf. The joint letter states: “... according to the Energy Information Administration, there is only about 209 days’ worth of oil and 13 months’ worth of natural gas in the Atlantic Ocean. The potential short-term economic gain drilling would bring to our economy is not worth sacrificing the immense and sustained value our coastal tourism and fishing industries bring to Atlantic Coast states and the entire United States. From our local businesses to bustling boardwalks and populated beaches, it is no wonder families frequent our beaches and people come from all over to experience the wonders of the Atlantic Coast.”

For a full overview of local municipalities, businesses interests, fishing groups, state and local elected officials, Members of Congress, and other stakeholders opposed to offshore drilling, go to [www.stophedrill.org](http://www.stophedrill.org).

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