

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 18, 2018

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary
United States Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke,

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to your recently-released Draft 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (National OCS Program). After reviewing the draft, we write to express our deep concern with the inclusion of any new offshore development and exploration activity off the Pacific Coast of Washington in the National OCS Program. There have been no new offshore drilling leases in our region for over 30-years and we urge you to keep Washington's coastline free from new offshore drilling.

Washington's ocean economy draws millions of people annually, seeking wildlife viewing, recreation, and fishing, among other opportunities, including some of the most profitable fisheries in the nation. Each year, healthy ocean economies along Washington's Pacific Coast generate around \$11.9 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) to the state and support more than 125,000 jobs. The tourism and recreation sector alone contributes 74,000 jobs — providing over 1.6 billion in wages— and generates more than \$3.7 billion to the state's GDP. New offshore development poses a significant threat to these thriving coastal businesses. Further, many of our constituents have spoken vehemently against new offshore drilling off the Pacific Coast of Washington with more than a dozen municipalities having passed resolutions in opposition to new offshore oil and gas drilling and exploration.

While we support the Administration's vision of making the United States energy independent, we do not believe new offshore drilling and development off the Pacific coast of Washington is the answer. Therefore, just as you did with Florida, we urge you to remove the Pacific Coast of Washington planning areas from the 2019-2024 National OCS Program. We look forward to working with you during your tenure as Secretary and thank you for your attention to this important manner.

Sincerely,


Dave Reichert
Member of Congress


Jaime Herrera-Beutler
Member of Congress