

*Office of the Governor
State of North Carolina*

*Roy Cooper
Governor*



*20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-0301*

January 31, 2018

The Hon. Ryan Zinke, Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

Over the past month, you and I have communicated regarding the Draft Proposed Program (DPP) for the Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2019-2024. Thank you for your ongoing attention to the risks the potential offshore drilling poses to North Carolina, and I write today to outline substantive steps that you can take to better understand these risks and the millions of Americans whom they impact.

I request that you grant a 60-day extension of the deadline for public comments regarding the DPP. This extension is necessary to allow for public hearings in coastal areas and to give the public, especially the people of eastern North Carolina, sufficient time to submit comments on offshore drilling proposed for nearly the entire U.S. Outer Continental Shelf.

Whether or not the above request can be accommodated, the opportunity for the public to provide input on the DPP is critical given the expanded scope of the program and its potential impacts on coastal communities and economies, the marine environment, and climate. The one "open house" style meeting planned for Raleigh is inadequate in duration, location, and format needed to meet the public input of all concerned North Carolinians.

As you have said, local voices must be heard during this process, and I urge you to hold meetings along the North Carolina coast. I request that Bureau of Ocean Energy Management hold at least three public hearings in the following North Carolina municipalities in addition to the already announced Raleigh location. This will allow your staff to hear from stakeholders who will be most directly impacted by the proposed expanded drilling: Kill Devil Hills, Morehead City and Wilmington. Additionally, formal oral testimony, as opposed to an "open house" format, would better ensure that local concerns are publicly heard and properly recorded.

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Finally, thank you for accepting my invitation for you to join me on the North Carolina coast to introduce you to the people whose livelihoods are threatened by this DPP. My Washington staff has been in touch with your staff about scheduling your visit. I look forward to welcoming you back to our beautiful coastline so you can have a meaningful discussion with our people.

With kind regards, I am

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy Cooper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "C".

Roy Cooper

cc: Dr. Walter Cruickshank, Acting Director
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240