

Oppose Unsafe Offshore Drilling and Exploration in Our Oceans Reject H.R. 4239: “SECURE American Energy Act”

H.R. 4239, the SECURE American Energy Act, represents a long list of industry giveaways that would encourage expanded offshore drilling and exploration in our oceans, risking our coastal economies, marine life, and vitality of marine ecosystems.

What is H.R. 4239?

The “SECURE America Energy Act” is anything but what the name suggests. It is an extreme bill that would eliminate or weaken common-sense safeguards for protecting marine life and our ocean and coastal resources in the pursuit of expanded dirty and dangerous offshore drilling. If passed, H.R. 4239 would put our coastal communities, local economies, dolphins, whales, manatees, and oceans at risk from expanded offshore exploration and drilling.

How does H.R. 4239 harm our oceans?

- Includes H.R. 3133, which would fast-track seismic airgun blasting—used for oil and gas exploration – and other industrial activities in the ocean that can harm whales, dolphins, manatees, and other marine mammals. This provision would severely weaken long-standing protections in the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) for these iconic species. Eliminating safeguards for dolphins and whales in the pursuit of expanded offshore drilling is shortsighted and wrong. If passed, the changes would prevent the permits from requiring almost any kind of mitigation and require automatic approval of permits under certain circumstances. This provision clearly reflects the wish list of special interests seeking to conduct seismic air gun surveys for oil and gas deposits in the Atlantic Ocean, Florida’s Gulf Coast, and other regions;
- Nullify common-sense Arctic exploratory drilling safety protections, designed to mitigate some of the risk for drilling in this remote and unforgiving region; and
- Eliminate long-standing presidential authority to establish marine national monuments under the Antiquities Act and ban the ability to protect specific areas of the Outer Continental Shelf from oil and gas leasing.

H.R. 4239 represents a substantial step backward for our nation’s publicly owned resources. This bill clearly represents the oil and gas industry’s interests to expand dirty and dangerous offshore drilling to new areas in U.S. waters, (absent needed safety measures and environmental protections) thereby threatening coastal economies and livelihoods.

Congress should reject H.R. 4239

Currently, through fishing, recreation and tourism, healthy ocean ecosystems along the Atlantic Coast generate \$95 billion in gross domestic product and support nearly 1.4 million jobs, and on the West Coast, more than \$22 billion in GDP and upwards of 455,000 jobs, annually. This bill puts these coastal economies at risk. This bill attempts to sidestep the public and coastal communities that have the most to lose from new offshore drilling.

As of today, opposition and concern over offshore drilling activities includes:

- Bipartisan opposition from Governors of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington, Oregon, and California;
- More than 140 municipalities on the East and West Coasts of the United States;
- Bipartisan opposition from nearly 1,200 local, state and federal elected officials;
- An alliance representing over 41,000 businesses and 500,000 fishing families from FL to ME;
- Department of Defense, Air Force, NASA, and the Florida Defense Support Task Force;
- The New England, South Atlantic, and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils; and
- Fishing interests such as the Southeastern Fisheries Association, Fisheries Survival Fund, Southern Shrimp Alliance, Billfish Foundation and International Game Fish Association.

It is time for Congress to join the growing opposition and reject H.R. 4239