

The Honorable Mark Sanford
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 8, 2017

Dear Mr. Sanford:

We, the undersigned organizations, thank you for your invaluable leadership in opposing offshore oil and gas drilling and seismic airgun blasting in the Atlantic Ocean. In particular, we would like to offer our support for introducing the Coastal Economies Protection Act (H.R.2252), which would establish a moratorium on offshore drilling related activities in the waters off the Atlantic, Straits of Florida and Eastern Gulf of Mexico for the next ten years. If passed, this legislation would give our businesses, communities and organizations the assurance needed to ensure the longevity of our livelihoods without the fear of impacts from offshore drilling and seismic airgun blasting.

As you know, there is extensive and growing opposition to offshore oil and gas drilling *and* exploration along the East Coast and Eastern Gulf of Mexico. As of today, 125 municipalities, including 23 in your home state of South Carolina, have publicly opposed seismic airgun blasting and/or offshore drilling, citing threats to marine life, coastal communities and local economies. Businesses that rely on healthy ocean ecosystems, such as fishing, tourism and recreation, would be put at tremendous risk if offshore oil and gas activities were allowed in the Atlantic Ocean. Accordingly, a business alliance that represents more than 41,000 businesses and associations, and 500,000 commercial fishing families has formed to oppose offshore drilling activities along the East Coast. It would be devastating to lose these industries, which produce nearly 1.4 million jobs and over \$95 billion in gross domestic product annually. We know you understand this as well, and we thank you again for introducing a bill meant to protect coastal economies from oil and gas interests.

We greatly appreciate your leadership in protecting our oceans and the communities that depend upon them. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff to block seismic airgun blasting and offshore drilling along the Atlantic, Straits of Florida and Eastern Gulf of Mexico.

Sincerely,

South Carolina

John Tynan
Conservation Voters of South Carolina

Alice Morrisey
Don't Drill SC Lowcountry

Lauren Gellatly
Lowcountry Local First

Jim Watkins
Stop Offshore Drilling in the Atlantic (SODA)

Eddy Moore
South Carolina Coastal Conservation League

Laura Moses
South Carolina Sierra Club, Charleston Chapter

Frank Knapp
South Carolina Small Business Chamber of
Commerce

Ben Gregg
South Carolina Wildlife Federation

Chris Carnevale
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

North Carolina

Neil Gilbert
Brunswick Environmental Action Tea

Tom Kies
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Larry Baldwin
Coastal Carolina Riverwatch

Larry Baldwin
Crystal Coast Waterkeeper

Karen Brown
Dare County Chamber of Commerce

Mike Giles
North Carolina Coastal Federation

Brian Buzby
North Carolina Conservation Network

Carrie Clark
North Carolina League of Conservation Voters

Lee Nettles
Outer Banks Visitors Bureau

Press Endo
Sierra Club, Cape Fear Group

Erin Carey
Sierra Club, North Carolina Chapter

Paul Getty
The Croatan Group, Sierra Club

Larry Baldwin
White Oak New Riverkeeper Alliance

Florida

Christian Wagley
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Jackie Lopez
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Laurie Murphy
Emerald Coastkeeper

Hunter Miller
Environmental Youth Council

Bill Hamilton
Friends of the Matanzas

Nana Royer
Green Sanctuary Team

Neil Armingeon
Matanzas RIVERkeeper

Kim Ross
Re-Think Energy Florida

Gary Appelson
Sea Turtle Conservancy

Frank Jackalone
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Justin Bloom
Suncoast Waterkeeper

Virginia

Catherine Kilduff
Center for Biological Diversity

Wendy Vaughn
Garden Club of Virginia

Chris Tandy
Loudoun 350

Karen Forget
Lynnhaven River NOW

Wendy Vaughn
Princess Anne Garden Club

Eileen Levandoski
Sierra Club, Virginia Chapter

Kristie Smith
Virginia Conservation Network

Mike Town
Virginia League of Conservation Voters

United States (national)

Frank Knapp
The Business Alliance for Protecting the
Atlantic Coast (BAPAC)

Dede Shelton
Hands Across the Sand

Brooks Pearson
Southern Environmental Law Center

Pete Stauffer
Surfrider Foundation

Regina Asmutis-Silvia
Whale and Dolphin Conservation, North
America

Georgia

David Kyler
Center for a Sustainable Coast

Vicki Weeks
Coffee Party Savannah

Vicki Weeks
Dogwood Alliance

Jennette Gayer
Environment Georgia

Daniel Parshley
Glynn Environmental Coalition

David Egan
Initiative to Protect Jekyll Island

Emily Markesteyn Kurilla
Ogeechee Riverkeeper

Jim Ries
One Less Straw

Jim Ries
One More Generation

Tonya Bonitatibus
Savannah Riverkeeper

Alex Kearns
St. Marys EarthKeepers

New Jersey

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Sandy Hook Sealife Foundation

Delaware

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Joanne Cabry
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Maryland

Matt Heim
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Clean Water Action Maryland