

RESOLUTION 10-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF DUNEDIN OPPOSING THE APPROVAL OF OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING IN STATE CONTROLLED WATERS OFF THE COASTLINE OF FLORIDA AND PARTICULARLY OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING IN THE GULF OF MEXICO IN AREAS OTHER THAN THOSE ALREADY APPROVED FOR OIL LEASING AND OIL EXPLORATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE HEREOF.

WHEREAS, tourism accounts for one third of budget revenues statewide and 96% of visitors cite the beaches as an influential factor in their decision to visit Florida; and

WHEREAS, tourist tax collections exceeded \$513,000,000 in fiscal year 2007 and more than 91,000 Floridians are employed in businesses that directly or indirectly support the tourist industry; and

WHEREAS, The City of Dunedin contains within its boundaries two of the highest quality and most pristine beaches in the State of Florida which have been recognized worldwide as being among the best beaches in the United States, consisting of Caladesi Island and Honeymoon Island State Park. Honeymoon Island State Park has in excess of 1,000,000 visitors per year with a substantial positive economic impact on the City of Dunedin and the desire of the oil industry to place oil wells within State controlled waters off of the coastline of the City of Dunedin puts at risk one of the City's largest attractions and threatens the quality of life of Dunedin's citizens; and

WHEREAS, the oil drilling economic benefits that are alleged by the proponents of such activity fails to take into account the risks to Florida's tourism industry due to offshore drilling rigs, pipelines, storage facilities, vessels and other infrastructure in and on Florida land and waters that are in direct visual, physical and environmental conflict with the world-class beaches that are a substantial contributor to Florida's tourism and economy; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Energy Department's forecasting on opening the Pacific, Atlantic and Eastern Gulf of Mexico regions to drilling would not have a significant impact on domestic crude oil prices before the year 2030; and

WHEREAS, despite technological advances in oil rig drilling technology, there is no positive assurance that catastrophic damage to coastline, beaches, plant and fish life can be avoided, whether from drilling mud containing heavy metals such as mercury, regular production, or accidental oil spills, whether during normal operating conditions or during storm conditions; and

WHEREAS, even under normal conditions, environmental specialists legitimately contend that the major risk from drilling platforms is the waste water that they routinely discharge which contains drilling fluids and heavy metals and other waste products generated from the oil drilling platforms. According to oil industry data, an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico can dump up to 90,000 tons of drilling fluid and other metal cuttings over its lifetime and these contaminants accumulate in the marine food web and have a realistic possibility of contaminating local beaches; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, Pinellas County learned how environmentally and economically destructive an oil spill can be when a vessel collision at the entrance to Tampa Bay resulted in a spill of more than 300,000 gallons that reached Pinellas beaches as far as 14 miles away and resulted in a 45% drop in tourism and a five billion dollar economic loss over the following two (2) years; and

WHEREAS, hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico are a fact of life and can and will occur and can result in major spills as experienced in Louisiana by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 where hundreds of platforms and pipelines were destroyed and nearly ¾ of a million gallons of oil and petroleum products were spilled from rigs, platforms and pipelines; and

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WHEREAS, given that Florida waters extend no more than ten miles from the coastline, drilling rigs of any size would be seen on the horizon in the daytime, in the sunset and especially at night; and

WHEREAS, although the oil industry has attempted to convince Florida citizens and Legislators that such oil drilling is needed immediately to provide revenue to the State, to lower the price of gasoline and to reduce dependency on foreign oil, the truth is that it will be many years before production would begin and decades before alleged production volumes would be achieved. Even those alleged volumes would have a negligible effect on gas prices and our country's dependence on foreign oil and that other initiatives are far more valuable to achieve the goals of reduction of dependence on foreign oil and it is only the private interests of the oil drilling companies and their lobbyists that are guaranteed to benefit from oil drilling off the Florida coasts.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF DUNEDIN, FLORIDA AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City Commission of the City of Dunedin opposes the expansion of offshore oil drilling within State controlled waters off of the Florida Coast. The City of Dunedin urges opposition to any legislative attempts to allow such offshore drilling and encourages officials at the county, state and federal levels to join Florida's communities in opposition to any oil drilling expansion past the areas already approved for pre-leasing, leasing and oil production activities.


Section 2. That the City Commission of the City of Dunedin encourages the legislators at all levels of government to take immediate steps to encourage and assist in the development of alternate sources of energy that will have a long lasting and positive effect of this country's reliance on foreign oil, thus making the people of the United States subject to economic and policy pressures that can be avoided by energy independence.

Section 3. That the City of Dunedin fully recognizes and accepts its fair share of the burden of responsibility to take steps to become more energy efficient, to encourage renewable energy projects and commits to instituting efforts to encourage the residents of the City of Dunedin to join it in appropriate energy conservation measures to assist the United States in achieving energy independence without endangering Florida's vital economic resources and its highly valued environment.

Section 4. That this Resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF DUNEDIN, FLORIDA, THIS 4th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2010.

Mayor



ATTEST:

City Clerk



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