

**A RESOLUTION OPPOSING OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, INCLUDING SEISMIC TESTING AND DRILLING.**

**WHEREAS**, on January 4, 2018 the U.S. Secretary of the Interior announced a draft proposal to lease areas off the Atlantic coast, including the coast of Virginia, for oil and gas exploratory testing and drilling; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2010 a similar proposal was scheduled to proceed but was cancelled after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico starkly demonstrated the serious risks of offshore drilling; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Ralph S. Northam has announced Virginia's opposition to the offshore drilling proposal, and has requested that areas off the coast of Virginia be exempted; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 15, 2018 the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission unanimously approved a motion to take action in opposition to offshore drilling near the Virginia Coast and to request that the waters off the coast of Virginia be excluded from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's next iteration of the five year oil and gas leasing program; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Defense has updated its 2010 findings on outer continental shelf oil and gas activities, noting new mission requirements, including expanded weapon and sensor footprints, and operational concerns in the Mid-Atlantic Planning Area that includes areas off Virginia's coast; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Portsmouth highly values the United States Navy and Coast Guard and opposes any action that would make their mission more difficult; and

**WHEREAS**, the tourism and commercial fishing industries are vital to the economies of Virginia and Hampton Roads, and both could be devastated by an offshore energy exploration catastrophe; and

**WHEREAS**, federal, state and local governments and other community groups have spent billions of dollars in funding and other resources in an effort to improve and maintain the condition of regional waterways, including the Chesapeake Bay; and

**WHEREAS**, the speculative benefit of oil and gas drilling is not worth the risk of a Deepwater Horizon-type incident that could cripple the regional environment and economy for decades;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Portsmouth, Virginia:

1. That it is strongly opposed to oil and gas exploration, including seismic testing and drilling, off the coast of Hampton Roads.

2. That it joins Governor Northam and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission in formally requesting that the Atlantic waters off Virginia be excluded from any federal oil and gas leasing program.

3. That it respectfully requests the assistance of United States Senators Warner and Kaine and Congressman Scott in securing this essential protection for Virginia's coast and its residents.

4. That the City Manager is hereby directed to forward a copy of this Resolution to the members of the City's federal and state legislative delegations, and to take such further actions as she deems advisable in furtherance of the purpose of this Resolution.

**ADOPTED** by the Council of the City of Portsmouth, Virginia, at a meeting held on March 13, 2018.

Teste:

*Delva G. White*  
City Clerk