



Cedar Point officials do right

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Now that Cedar Point commissioners have approved a resolution opposing the exploration and drilling for oil and gas off the coast of North Carolina, the scales are further tipped in favor of common sense. There is simply no good reason – at this time – to even consider allowing seismic testing, much less drilling, off our coast. The rewards just do not rise to a level that would outweigh the risks.

We appreciate the fact that Cedar Point Commissioner David Winberry and the majority of the town commissioners recognized this. "I've thought about it and thought about it," David Winberry said during the January meeting of the Cedar Point commissioners. "At one time I had mixed emotions. Now I've changed my mind. I thought at one time we had a shortage of oil. Now the world is glutted with oil. Seismic testing ... I don't know what it would do to marine life; I'm not a scientist. But I do know that if we have oil wells off North Carolina ... well, 99 times out of 100 nothing's going to happen. But if we did have a spill ... you see what it did in the Gulf of Mexico, and you know what it would do to Carteret County and eastern North Carolina."

The commissioner correctly points out that – under current federal legislation – the 50 to 75 jobs that would likely be created by offshore drilling would be the total benefit for North Carolina. On the other hand, should a disaster come to pass, "it might put 1,000 or 2,000 small businesses out of business and put 3,000 or 4,000 people out of work."

We express our appreciation to the three Cedar Point commissioners who voted to approve the resolution: David Winberry, Frank Winberry and Pam Castellano. It is not easy to take a stand in such a public arena; it takes courage.

Reaching more or less the same conclusions, the elected leaders in Emerald Isle and Swansboro approved similar resolutions in the past few months. To them as well, we express appreciation. For those towns of the Swansboro community yet to take a stand – Bogue, Cape Carteret and Peletier – it is not too late. Our community – like all of coastal North Carolina – relies too heavily on tourism to take an ill-advised risk on offshore drilling. Particularly when the companies that reap the rewards will leave so little for our state.

http://www.carolinacoastonline.com/tideland_news/opinions/article_3359b49c-e604-11e5-bed5-0b645f18f301.html