

A RESOLUTION TO EXPRESS THE TOWN OF ATLANTIC BEACH'S OPPOSITION TO SEISMIC TESTING AND OFFSHORE DRILLING ACTIVITIES

WHEREAS, the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is currently in the process of trying to open the mid and South Atlantic Ocean to exploration and development of offshore oil and gas including risky methods, such as seismic blasting; and,

WHEREAS, seismic air-guns fire intense blasts of compressed air, one of the loudest manmade sounds in the ocean at 200-230 decibels (for comparison a jet engine at 50 meters or a gunshot is 140 decibels). Air gun blasts can occur as frequently as every ten seconds, for days to weeks at a time and are loud enough to harm marine and aquatic life;

WHEREAS, the full impact of seismic testing and offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean are not yet fully understood by scientists, the oil and gas industry, BOEM, or the Federal Government, and lower-impact alternative technologies may be available for exploration in the near future; and,

WHEREAS, exploratory and commercial drilling, extraction, and transportation of offshore oil and gas resources pose a significant risk of a spill; and,

WHEREAS, eventual offshore drilling may require significant onshore infrastructure, such as pipelines or refineries, which may harm the character of our coast; and,

WHEREAS, the rich culture of the Town of Atlantic Beach was formed of mostly Gullah/Geechee people, descendants of slaves who lived for 300 years on the Sea Islands from Wilmington, North Carolina to Jacksonville, Florida; and,

WHEREAS, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named the Gullah/Geechee culture, coastline, and Sea Islands to its list of 11 Most Endangered Historic Sites; and,

WHEREAS, Gullah/Geechee culture is traditionally tied to the land, the water, and their natural resources, therefore making access to land and waterways a truly vital part of any efforts to preserve traditional life ways of Gullah and Geechee peoples,

WHEREAS, the Gullah/Geechee story represents a crucial component of local, regional, and national history and preserving and interpreting Gullah/Geechee culture and its associated sites is significant to people of all racial, regional, and ethnic backgrounds and is vital to telling the story of the American heritage; and,

WHEREAS, eventual offshore drilling activities may impact the coastal patterns of natural, estuarine, scenic, and cultural resource features, qualities, processes, uses, values, and relationships of the Gullah/Geechee peoples; and,

WHEREAS, offshore drilling activities pose threats to coastal wetlands in South Carolina, which are of intrinsic ecological value for numerous migratory bird species, serve as essential nursery habitats for recreational and commercially important fisheries, and act as natural buffers from storm surge and hurricanes; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Atlantic Beach is a State of South Carolina municipality where a major economic force is tourism related to the appreciation of our natural coastal and historical environment, which are also the primary factors contributing to the high quality of life the Town's residents enjoy, enabling business recruitment and attracting new residents; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Atlantic Beach endeavors to be a good steward of the state's environment and its resources; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Atlantic Beach recommends that it would be more economically and ecologically responsible to pursue non-polluting sources of renewable energy through solar, wind, and biomass energy production projects that pose less risk to our coastal environment and economic health before using uncertain methods of seismic blasting for offshore oil and gas exploration.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF ATLANTIC BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA THAT:

Section 1: That the foregoing recitals are incorporated in and made part of this reference.

Section 2: The Town of Atlantic Beach is opposed to offshore seismic testing and offshore oil and gas development off the South Carolina coast.

Enacted this 14th day of September, 2015.

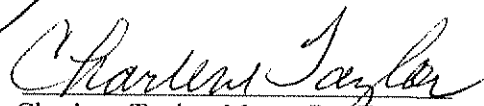
ATTEST:



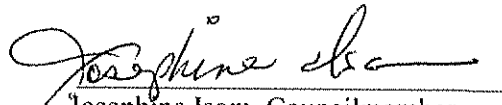
Town Clerk



Jake Evans, Mayor



Charlene Taylor, Mayor Pro Tem



Josephine Isom, Councilmember



Kenneth McLaurin, Councilmember



Town Manager

Lenearl Evans, Councilmember