

RESOLUTION 2017-9

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT WALTON BEACH, FLORIDA, EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO OFFSHORE DRILLING ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING SEISMIC AIRGUN BLASTING; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the United States government has expressed interest in opening the Atlantic Ocean and Eastern Gulf of Mexico to offshore oil and gas development and exploration, including risky methods such as seismic airgun blasting; and,

WHEREAS, seismic airguns fire intense blasts of compressed air, one of the loudest manmade sounds in the ocean, every 10-12 seconds for days, weeks, or months on end; and,

WHEREAS, seismic airgun noise has been shown to harm and injure dolphins, whales, endangered sea turtles, fish, and other marine life; and,

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

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

WHEREAS, offshore drilling activities pose threats to treasured vacation destinations on Florida's Coasts, which are of intrinsic economic value for numerous industries, provide essential nursery habitats for recreational and commercially important fisheries, and act as natural buffers from storm surge and hurricanes; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Walton Beach recognizes that the tourism and fishing industries, which depend on a healthy and vibrant coastal environment, both serve as major economic drivers benefiting the current and future residents, property owners, and visitors to Florida; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Walton Beach endeavors to be a good steward of the state and region's environment and its resources; and,

WHEREAS, exploration and development of oil and gas resources off the coast of Florida will not effectively address the long-term energy needs of our country; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Walton Beach recommends that it would be more economically and ecologically responsible to pursue non-polluting sources of renewable energy such as solar and wind, that pose less risk to the coastal environment and economic health before using uncertain methods of seismic airgun blasting for offshore oil and gas deposits.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Fort Walton Beach, Florida, as follows:

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Section 1. Incorporation of Recitals.

The above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein.

Section 2. Opposition of City Council.

Offshore oil and gas drilling and exploration, including seismic airgun blasting, will put Florida's environment, beaches, marine resources and local economies at risk, therefore, the City Council expresses its opposition to these activities and urges the federal government not to pursue such practices off Florida's coast.

Section 3. Authorization.

The Mayor is hereby designated and authorized to execute any documents related to this Resolution, and upon approval, a copy will be provided to the Florida Congressional Delegation.

Section 4. Effective Date.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon approval by the City Council.

Adopted:

June 27, 2017

Richard A. Ryneerson
Richard A. Ryneerson, Mayor

Attest:

Kim M. Barnes
Kim M. Barnes, City Clerk

Approved for form, legal sufficiency

Hayward Dykes, Jr.
Hayward Dykes, Jr., City Attorney

