

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO OFFSHORE EXPLORATION, DRILLING ACTIVITIES AND SEISMIC BLAST ACTIVITIES OFF THE COAST OF NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, Orange County is committed to being a sound steward of the environment; and

WHEREAS, Orange County stands with coastal municipalities in their pursuit of prudent shoreline protection and preservation; and

WHEREAS, seismic air guns firing intense blasts of compressed air are among the loudest human-made sounds in the ocean; and

WHEREAS, these seismic 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; and

WHEREAS, the full impacts of seismic blasting and offshore drilling in the Atlantic are not yet fully understood by scientists, the oil and gas industry, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, or the Federal Government; and

WHEREAS, exploratory and commercial drilling, extraction, and the transportation of offshore oil and gas resources poses significant economic and environmental risks; and

WHEREAS, offshore drilling activities pose specific threats for the offshore marine ecosystems and coastal and river wetlands which are of intrinsic ecological value for numerous migratory bird species, serve as essential nursery habitats for our recreational and commercially important fisheries, and act as natural buffers from storm surge and hurricanes; and

WHEREAS, commercial and recreational fishing are critical economic and quality of life drivers; and

WHEREAS, tourism is the economic backbone of the North Carolina coast; and

WHEREAS, one oil spill could devastate the economy, environment and social fabric, as demonstrated by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010;

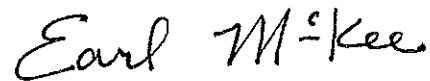
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Orange County Commissioners is opposed to offshore oil and gas exploration, offshore drilling activities and seismic blast activities on the continental shelf or elsewhere off the coast of North Carolina;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Board of Orange County Commissioners stands in solidarity with North Carolina coastal communities which may be affected by the onshore infrastructure supporting offshore exploration and drilling and may suffer adverse long-term social, economic and environmental impacts from offshore exploration and production of petroleum resources on the continental shelf off the coast of North Carolina;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Board of Orange County Commissioners calls upon all North Carolina municipal and county governing bodies to pass similar resolutions to this one and urges the Triangle J Council of Governments, the NC Association of County Commissioners and the NC League of Municipalities to join in this effort;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Board of Orange County Commissioners urges Governor Pat McCrory and the entire North Carolina General Assembly to oppose offshore petroleum production policies that risk the health, safety and sound environmental stewardship of North Carolina's coastline, whose natural beauty attracts a proven tourism-driven economy.

ADOPTED this the 1st day of September, 2015.



Earl McKee, Chair
Orange County Board of Commissioners