

**MARK SANFORD**  
FIRST DISTRICT, SOUTH CAROLINA

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON  
OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

COMMITTEE ON  
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-4001

- 2211 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4001  
(202) 225-3176
- 530 JOHNNIE DODDS BOULEVARD, SUITE 201  
MOUNT PLEASANT, SC 29464-3083  
(843) 352-7572  
FAX: (843) 352-7620
- P.O. Box 1538  
BEAUFORT, SC 29901-1538  
(843) 521-2530  
FAX: (843) 521-2535

[WWW.SANFORD.HOUSE.GOV](http://WWW.SANFORD.HOUSE.GOV)

April 11, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke  
Secretary of Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to urge you to retain the 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program in its current form and to deny any requests for permits to conduct seismic airgun blasting to search for oil and gas deposits in the Atlantic Ocean.

Our state's fisheries and ocean based tourism and recreation support nearly 79,000 jobs and generate over \$7 billion in economic activity each year in South Carolina. Moving forward with offshore drilling and/or exploration, including seismic airgun blasting, would mean the industrialization of our state's coastline with oil and gas infrastructure, create use conflicts in waters along our coast, and place us at risk of a catastrophic disaster like the BP oil spill of 2010. Ultimately, offshore drilling and/or exploration represent clear conflicts for the existing economic and environmental advantages that our state and coastal communities rely on.

Over 120 municipalities, including 23 in South Carolina, have formally opposed oil and gas development in the Atlantic. These communities span the entire South Carolina coast, from Hilton Head to Beaufort to Charleston to Georgetown to Myrtle Beach, and encompass all three of South Carolina's fastest growing metro areas. Numerous fishing groups have also expressed concern, including both the Mid- and South-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils.

We urge you to respect the current iteration of the 2017-2022 OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program, which does not include Atlantic offshore area for oil and gas development, and oppose any attempt to open the Atlantic Ocean to seismic airgun blasting to search for oil and gas.

For your information, we are enclosing a sampling of the resolutions passed by each of our coastal municipalities.

Thanks for your attention and know that we want to work with you in a constructive way to protect our precious coast.

Sincerely,



Mark Sanford  
Member of Congress

John Tecklenburg  
Mayor of Charleston

Billy Keyserling  
Mayor of Beaufort