

RESOLUTION NO.: R-2015-042

*A Resolution to Express the City of Columbia'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, 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 City of Columbia 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 City's residents enjoy, enabling business recruitment and attracting new residents; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Columbia endeavors to be a good steward of the state's environment and its resources; and,

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

ORIGINAL
STAMPED IN RED

ORIGINAL
STAMPED IN RED

WHEREAS, the City of Columbia 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 Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbia this 5th day of May, 2015 as follows:

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

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

Requested by:

Councilmember Devine _____



MAYOR

Approved by:



City Manager

Approved as to form:



City Attorney

ATTEST:


City Clerk

Introduced: 5/5/2015
Final Reading: 5/5/2015