

September 10, 2019

Dear Representative:

As a coalition of organizations united against the expansion of offshore drilling we write to convey our support for H.R. 1941, the Coastal and Marine Economies Protection Act, and H.R. 205, the Protecting and Securing Florida's Coastline Act of 2019. We ask for your "YES" vote on both bills when they come to the House floor tomorrow.

As you know, the Department of the Interior has proposed opening nearly all of U.S. federal waters to expanded offshore drilling in its draft proposed 2019–2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. The President's plan risks [more than](#) 2 million American jobs—supported by the Atlantic, Pacific, and Florida Gulf coasts—in tourism, recreation, fishing and associated sectors, as well as hundreds of billions of dollars in GDP.

The risks to coastal communities and ocean ecosystems are real and significant. Time and again, the oil and gas industry touts its commitments to drilling safety and high environmental standards, while its track record shows otherwise. In the seven years following the 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon disaster, the oil and gas industry [experienced](#) more than 4,000 explosions, collisions, and related incidents, including 34 oil spills of more than 2,000 gallons each.

In addition, expanded offshore oil and gas development also raises national security concerns. According to the [Department of Defense](#) (DOD), there are conflicts with drilling and maintaining areas along the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) that are critical for military readiness. The Eastern Gulf of Mexico, the bulk of which was placed under a congressional moratorium on oil and gas leasing under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (GOMESA)—through June 30, 2022—is a key area for DOD as well. An April 2017 [letter](#) from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense states: "The Department of Defense (DoD) cannot overstate the vital importance of maintaining this moratorium." BOEM is planning to offer this area up for drilling once the moratorium expires.

H.R. 1941, introduced by Congressman Joe Cunningham (D-SC) and Congressman Francis Rooney (R-FL), would place a permanent moratorium on offshore oil and gas leasing in the Atlantic Ocean, Straits of Florida, and Pacific Ocean. H.R. 205, introduced by Congressman Rooney and Congresswoman Kathy Castor (D-FL), would amend GOMESA to make permanent the current moratorium in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico.

With your "YES" votes for these bills, you will stand united with East Coast and West Coast governors; over 2,100 elected officials from both parties and from all levels of government; 369 municipalities and counting; over 50,000 business interests; and over 500,000 fishing families—all on the record against expanded offshore drilling—as well as millions of Americans from all walks of life who depend on healthy coasts for their communities and livelihoods.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Natural Resources Defense Council
Alaska Wilderness Action
Alaska's Big Village Network
Audubon Society
Cetacean Society International
Clean Ocean Action
Clean Water Action
Climate Hawks Vote
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life
Conservation Law Foundation
Defenders of Wildlife
Earth Law Center
Earthjustice
Environmental Defense Center
Gotham Whale
GreenLatinos
Heal the Bay
Healthy Gulf
Inland Ocean Coalition
International Fund for Animal Welfare
International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute
League of Conservation Voters
Marine Conservation Institute
National Audubon Society
National Parks Conservation Association
NY4WHALES
Ocean Conservancy
Ocean Conservation Research
Oceanic Preservation Society
Oil Change U.S.
One Hundred Miles
Save Our Shores
Save the Manatee
Sierra Club
Southern Environmental Law Center
The Wilderness Society
Voices for Progress