

The Princess Anne Garden Club

P. O. Box 1319

Virginia Beach, VA 23451

November 4, 2016

The Honorable Sally Jewell  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell,

Thank you for removing the Atlantic Ocean from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

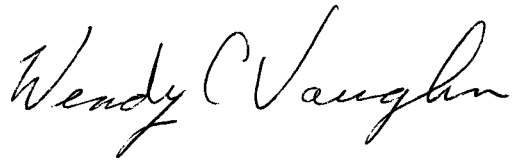
No fewer than 120 municipalities in East Coast states have formally voiced opposition to oil and gas development in the Atlantic. Together, these municipalities represent 90% of the coastline that would be at direct risk from seismic airgun blasting and offshore drilling from Cape May, New Jersey to Cape Canaveral, Florida. Additionally, over 1,100 business interests and over 1,200 federal, state and local legislators have opposed oil and gas exploration or development in the Atlantic. The Princess Anne Garden Club is one of these voices.

The Princess Anne Garden Club is an active organization of 70 civic leaders in Virginia Beach. We have served Virginia Beach for 84 years. We have contributed several million dollars in economic impact to Virginia Beach through our annual Historic Garden Week and local community projects. We oppose offshore drilling and seismic airgun blasting for the following reasons:

- The risk of a disaster spill like the Deepwater Horizon in 2010 is real.
- The certainty that day-to-day operations of oil drilling cause persistent release of toxic chemicals and generate oil spills that are the source of chronic pollution of the ocean, beaches, wetlands, and shoreline waterways.
- Seventy-five leading marine scientists from around the world sent a letter to your administration in March 2015 stating that "the proposed seismic activity is likely to have significant, long-lasting, and widespread impacts on the reproduction and survival of fish and marine mammal populations in the region, including the critically endangered North Atlantic Right Whale, of which only 500 remain."

We are grateful that the Atlantic is no longer considered for offshore drilling in the upcoming five-year program. However, our ocean is priceless and our coastal assets are far too valuable to ever put at risk from oil and gas development. We urge you to use your presidential authority to permanently protect the Atlantic Ocean and our communities from offshore drilling and seismic airgun blasting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy C. Vaughn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy C. Vaughn, Conservation Chairman  
The Princess Anne Garden Club

cc: Tommy Beaudreau, Chief of Staff, Department of the Interior

Janice Schneider, Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior

Abigail Ross Hopper, Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

John Blair, Director, Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs

Member, Garden Club of Virginia