February 22, 2018

Secretary Ryan Zinke
U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
1849 C Street NW.
Washington, DC 20240
Email: oiea@ios.doi.gov

RE: 2019-2024 Draft Proposed National Oil and Gas Leasing Program

Dear Secretary Zinke:

As elected Representatives in the South Carolina General Assembly, we stand with Governor Henry McMaster in asking that the State of South Carolina be excluded from the 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

We share our Governor’s concern about that “massive refineries, gas storage tanks, and other large-scale maintenance and operating facilities are not economically compatible with existing coastal residential and resort development or with our protected Sea Islands, estuaries and tidal marsh refuges.”

Every city and town council along the South Carolina coastline has voted to oppose seismic testing and offshore drilling for oil and gas. We object to prioritizing the interests of the oil and gas industry above the concerns of these coastal communities.

We urge the Department of Interior to refocus agency resources to identify strategies to expand clean energy sources. South Carolina is eager to advance clean and renewable energy to allow future generations to enjoy unlimited supplies of American-made, pollution-free energy.

In conclusion, we repeat Governor McMaster’s words from his State of the State: “We cannot stop hurricanes, but we can avoid oil spills. We cannot take a chance. We must do whatever it takes to preserve this economic paradise we call ‘the beach, the marsh, the coast and the Lowcountry. It is made of gold.”

Sincerely yours,

Gregory D. Duckworth
SC House Signatures on Letter to Secretary Zinke and BOEM re:2019-2024 DPP:

Representative Terry Alexander/D/59
Representative Mandy Powers Norrell/D/44
Representative Robert Williams/D/62
Representative Bill Clyburn/D/82
Representative Joe Jefferson/D/102
Representative Chandra Dillard/D/23

Representative Mike Sottile/R/112
Representative Bill Crosby/R/117
Representative Michael Rivers/D/121
Representative Weston Newton/R/120
Representative Shannon Erickson/R/124

Representative David Weeks/D/51
Representative Todd Rutherford/D/74
Representative Peter McCoy/R/115
Representative Greg Duckworth/R/104
Representative William Cogswell/R/110
Representative Bill Herbkersman/R/118
Representative James Smith/D/72
Representative Russell Ott/D/93
Representative Beth Bernstein/D/78
Representative Mike Anthony/D/42
Representative Leon Howard/D/76
Representative Jackie Hayes/D/55
Representative Bill Bowers/D/122
Representative Roger Kirby/D/61
Representative Will Wheeler/D/50
Representative Robert Brown/D/116