



TOWN of NEW SHOREHAM  
TOWN COUNCIL  
OFFICE of FIRST WARDEN  
KENNETH C. LACOSTE

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March 7, 2018

MAR 12 2018

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator  
170 Westminister Street, Suite 200  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Senator Whitehouse:

At its February 21, 2018 meeting the New Shoreham Town Council adopted the enclosed resolution in opposition to the proposed inclusion of the North Atlantic region in the 2019-2024 national outer continental shelf oil and gas leasing program.

We, united in our determination to protect our cultural heritage, our marine ecosystem, and our economic future, hereby call upon the Secretary of the Interior to remove the North Atlantic region from consideration for oil and gas exploration and drilling.

We hope you will join our resolute determination against this program.

Sincerely,

Kenneth C. Lacoste  
First Warden  
Town of New Shoreham

cc: The Honorable John F. Reed  
Dr. Walter Cruickshank  
The Honorable James R. Langevin  
The Honorable V. Susan Sosnowski  
The Honorable Blake A. Filippi  
The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo  
President Donald Trump

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF NEW SHOREHAM, RHODE ISLAND  
IN OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED INCLUSION OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC REGION IN  
THE 2019-2024 NATIONAL OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF  
OIL AND GAS LEASING PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management (BOEM) in the U.S. Department of Interior has released the 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Draft Proposed Program, a draft program proposal for offshore oil and gas leasing for the next five years; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposal would open the federal waters of the North Atlantic region to oil and gas exploration and drilling, an area that begins just three miles off the coasts of New Jersey through Maine, within which the State of Rhode Island is centrally situated; and

**WHEREAS**, Rhode Islanders have long relied upon New England's marine environment as a source of food, jobs, and recreation and, through strong laws and leadership at the state and local levels, have conserved and protected our fisheries, habitats, and coastal resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of New Shoreham, RI (Block Island) is located 12 miles off the south coast of Rhode Island with a geography, history, culture and identity defined by the presence of the surrounding sea; and

**WHEREAS**, with particular interests, New Shoreham's commitment to sound marine and coastal stewardship, as demonstrated by its successful petition to the EPA in 1993 establishing Great Salt Pond as one of the earliest federal no discharge zones in the region and as a stakeholder and active participant in the state's Ocean Special Area Management Plan study; and

**WHEREAS**, with guidance from an award winning Comprehensive Community Plan focused on sustainability and environmental conservation that includes distinct sections on the ocean and protected open space, New Shoreham has reaped enormous cultural, environmental, and economic benefits for the citizens of the entire Ocean State; and

**WHEREAS**, New Shoreham has established itself as a proven leader in sound ocean planning as a basis for accommodating new, sustainable ocean uses such as wind energy, and is home to the nation's first offshore wind farm; and

**WHEREAS**, Block Island recognizes and is acting upon the need to ensure that the community maintains its resilience in the face of rising sea levels and other impacts associated with climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, oil and gas drilling has never been viewed as compatible with our state and regional interests and thus has been removed from consideration for decades, and prior experience has shown the devastating consequences of oil spills, as evidenced by the long term negative impact of among others, the 1996 North Cape oil spill, and

**WHEREAS**, now, more than ever, Block Island stands opposed to the use of our offshore waters to oil and gas drilling;


**NOW, THEREFORE**, we, united in our determination to protect our cultural heritage, our marine ecosystem, and our economic future, hereby call upon the Secretary of the Interior to remove the North Atlantic region from consideration for oil and gas exploration and drilling;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that we decree that this resolution be made a part of the permanent record of the Town of New Shoreham. Witness our hands and seal this 21<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2018.

  
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First Warden Kenneth C. Lacoste

  
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Second Warden Andre M. Boudreau

  
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Town Councilor Martha A. Ball

  
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Town Councilor Sven Risom