

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Rob Bishop
Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the Natural Resources Committee's proposed legislation, the "Enhancing State Management of Federal Lands and Waters Act." This proposed bill would penalize states like New Jersey, who have responded to their coastal community's demands by effectively banning oil and gas development off of state shores. Specifically, we request that the Committee refrain from introducing any legislation that would put the economy of coastal communities or the health of our waters at risk.

We have heard from more than 41,000 business owners, 500,000 fishing families, and numerous elected officials along our coasts that recognize and reject the risks of offshore oil and gas development. In response, on April 20, 2018, Governor Murphy of New Jersey signed the Shore Tourism and Ocean Protection (STOP) from Offshore Oil and Gas Act into law. This bill would ban offshore drilling in state waters and would prohibit infrastructure from being built in state waters that would support drilling in federal waters off of the coast of New Jersey. It is time that the federal government listens to the coastal communities that will suffer most from the impacts of oil and gas development.

The Enhancing State Management of Federal Lands and Waters Act would impose a fee on any state that prevents offshore drilling on 50 percent or more of a proposed lease sale. States would be required to pay a fee equal to at least one-tenth the estimated government revenue that would have been generated from the lease sales, royalties, and other revenue streams, if the oil and gas drilling had taken place. The threat of punishing coastal states with fees is trivial compared to the economic and environmental threat of off-shore drilling.

The vitality of coastal economies is tied to healthy ocean ecosystems. Currently, healthy ocean ecosystems along the East Coast support more than \$95 billion in gross domestic product and nearly 1.4 million jobs annually through fishing, recreation and tourism. In New Jersey alone, the tourism industry generates \$44 billion a year and supports over half a million direct and indirect jobs. Additionally, New Jersey's commercial fishing industry generates over \$7.9 billion annually and supports over 50,000 jobs, and the state has one of the largest saltwater recreational fishing industries in the nation. We have seen the damage that the BP oil spill had on

the coastal communities of the Gulf Coast, and therefore we will stop at nothing to prevent this disaster from occurring off of the Jersey Shore.

Should the Enhancing State Management of Federal Lands and Waters Act be introduced and passed through Congress, states like New Jersey would be severely punished for taking responsible actions, such as imposing state laws on behalf of our constituents, to prevent drilling in state waters.

The potential for significant economic and environmental harm along the Jersey Shore demands careful consideration. Therefore, we urge the Committee to refrain from introducing the Enhancing State Management of Federal Lands and Waters Act, or any legislation that would put the economy of coastal communities or the health of our waters at risk.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

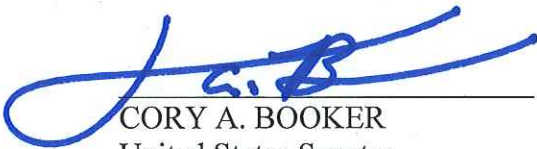
Sincerely,



FRANK PALLONE, JR.
Member of Congress



ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator



CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator



ALBIO SIRES
Member of Congress



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress



FRANK A. LOBIONDO
Member of Congress



LEONARD LANCE
Member of Congress



DONALD NORCROSS
Member of Congress



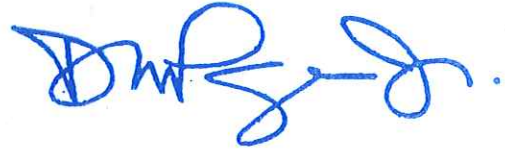
RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN
Member of Congress



BILL PASCRELL, JR.
Member of Congress



TOM MACARTHUR
Member of Congress



DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.
Member of Congress



BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN
Member of Congress



JOSH GOTTHEIMER
Member of Congress