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CITY OF BEAUFORT
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BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29902

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Billy Keyserling, Mayor
Mike McFee, Mayor Pro Tem
George O' Kelley
Philip Cromer
Stephen Murray

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

November 16, 2016

Dear President Obama,


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 opposed oil and gas development in the Atlantic, including 100% of South Carolina coastal towns and cities. Together, these municipalities represent 90% of the coastline that would be at direct risk from seismic air gun blasting, from Cape May, New Jersey to Cape Canaveral, Florida. Additionally, over 1,200 federal, state and local legislators have opposed oil and gas exploration or development in the Atlantic. The Business Alliance for the Protection of the Atlantic Coast, which formed in September and represents more than 12,000 businesses and 500,000 fishing families from Georgia to Maine, has also voiced opposition to offshore oil and gas exploration or development in the Atlantic.

It is clear that Atlantic coastal communities, elected leaders, and other stakeholders do not want offshore oil and gas development, including offshore drilling and seismic air gun blasting. We will never support the destruction of our ocean, which supports our economies and way of life. Our state's fisheries and ocean based tourism and recreation support nearly 79,000 jobs and generate over \$7 billion in economic activity each year in South Carolina.

We are grateful that the Atlantic is no longer being 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 of 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,


Billy Keyserling
Mayor of Beaufort, SC