

April 11, 2016

Director Abigail Ross Hopper, Esq.
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

SENT VIA EMAIL AND MAIL

Dear Director Hopper,

On behalf of the signed organizations, we thank you for your leadership in protecting our beaches and way of life from offshore drilling.

The Southeast coast is one of the most environmentally vulnerable and valuable regions of the country. Dozens of national wildlife refuges, marine protected areas, and national seashores and beaches are located along the coast. Hundreds of unique wildlife species that require healthy beaches and clean ocean water to live and flourish would be adversely affected by a spill.

This was an important decision, and coastal residents made sure their voices were heard. Over 1,800 citizens attended public hearings up and down the Atlantic Coast, turning out in record numbers. More than 100 towns, cities, and communities along the Atlantic Coast passed resolutions against offshore drilling and seismic testing in response to the Draft Proposed 5 Year OCS Plan last year; and over 1,000 business sent letters directed to the Obama Administration, citing the threats offshore drilling would pose to their livelihoods if allowed. We appreciate your agency's thoughtful outreach through its dozens of fact finding trips to our communities to listen to those most impacted from potential drilling. We thank you for your diligence, and time spent with those community leaders listening to their concerns.

With the removal of the Mid and South Atlantic from the Proposed 5 Year OCS Plan, our coasts are breathing a sigh of relief. Thank you again for heeding the concerns of the people by protecting our coasts from drilling. We look forward to working with you and the rest of your staff, with the continued goal of preserving our beautiful coasts for future generations.

Sincerely,

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