



From the Office of the Mayor

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Office of the Mayor

January 11, 2018

Ms. Kelly Hammerle
Chief, National Oil and Gas Leasing Program
Development and Coordination Branch
Leasing Division, Office of Strategic Resources
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (VAM-LD)
45600 Woodland Road
Sterling, VA 20166

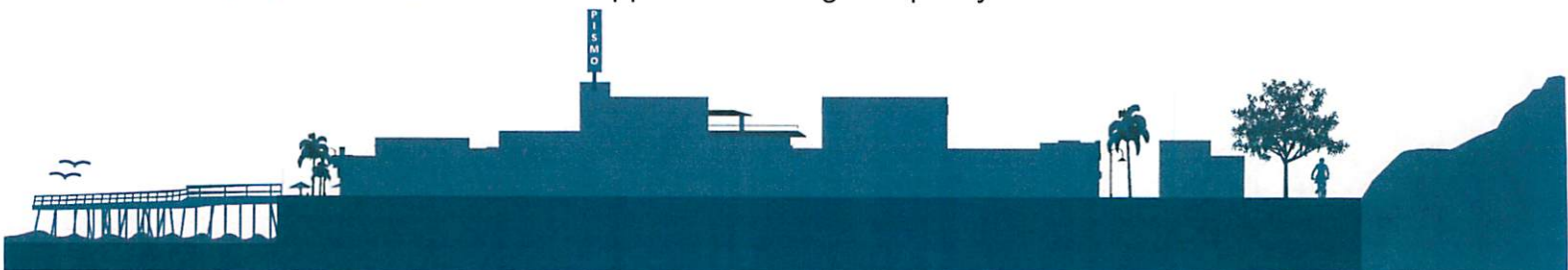
Re: Comments on the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management 2019-2024 Draft Proposed National Oil and Gas Leasing Program, Docket ID: BOEM-2017-0074

Dear Ms. Hammerle:

On behalf of the City of Pismo Beach, California, I write in strong opposition to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's 2019-2024 Draft Proposed National Oil and Gas Leasing program and any expansion of offshore drilling off the coast of California. Pismo Beach is located in San Luis Obispo County on the Central Coast of California. The Draft Proposed Program includes two leases in the Southern California region, which includes the water off the shores of Pismo Beach, however we are also opposed to the lease sales in the Central California region, due to the potential for impacts on our shores. We oppose any increase in offshore energy productions that would threaten our pristine coastal environment and our tourism industry that depends on the coast.

The City benefits greatly from a thriving tourism economy with our pristine coast as a tremendous driver of our success. In 2016-2017, the City collected \$10.3 million in transient occupancy taxes. This is the largest component of the City's revenue, making up 27% of the adopted revenue in the City's 2018 and 2019 budgets. Any drilling activity or spill impacting our shores would obviously have a hugely detrimental impact on our tourism sector and our community as a whole.

Beginning in 1982, no new leases off the California coast occurred, either because Congress explicitly banned them or through Presidential Directive, as was done under Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton. This lasted until 2008, when President George W. Bush rescinded the Presidential Directive and Congress allowed its ban to expire. However, no federal lease sales in California coastal waters have occurred since the ban was lifted. We support continuing that policy.



Following the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill, which at the time was the largest oil spill to occur in U.S. waters, the federal government and California enacted legislation to protect the environment and limit energy exploration off coastal waters. In California, this included the creation of the Coastal Commission, the passage of the California Environmental Quality Act, and a ban on new oil and natural gas leases in state-controlled waters. This ban lasted for 16 years, and was reinstated by the Legislature in 1994. In Congress, the Santa Barbara spill helped lead to the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act, the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, and a general strengthening of federal regulations on oil and gas exploration.

The City of Pismo Beach opposes the expansion of offshore drilling in California, particularly the planned leases in the Central and South California regions. We urge you to eliminate these proposed leases in the next draft of the plan. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Ed Waage
Mayor

