

September 10, 2019

Dear Representative:

As a coalition of organizations united against the expansion of offshore drilling we write to convey our support for H.R. 1941, the Coastal and Marine Economies Protection Act, and H.R. 205, the Protecting and Securing Florida's Coastline Act of 2019. We ask for your "YES" vote on both bills when they come to the House floor tomorrow.

As you know, the Department of the Interior has proposed opening nearly all of U.S. federal waters to expanded offshore drilling in its draft proposed 2019–2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. The President's plan risks [more than](#) 2 million American jobs—supported by the Atlantic, Pacific, and Florida Gulf coasts—in tourism, recreation, fishing and associated sectors, as well as hundreds of billions of dollars in GDP.

The risks to coastal communities and ocean ecosystems are real and significant. Time and again, the oil and gas industry touts its commitments to drilling safety and high environmental standards, while its track record shows otherwise. In the seven years following the 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon disaster, the oil and gas industry [experienced](#) more than 4,000 explosions, collisions, and related incidents, including 34 oil spills of more than 2,000 gallons each.

In addition, expanded offshore oil and gas development also raises national security concerns. According to the [Department of Defense](#) (DOD), there are conflicts with drilling and maintaining areas along the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) that are critical for military readiness. The Eastern Gulf of Mexico, the bulk of which was placed under a congressional moratorium on oil and gas leasing under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (GOMESA)—through June 30, 2022—is a key area for DOD as well. An April 2017 [letter](#) from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense states: "The Department of Defense (DoD) cannot overstate the vital importance of maintaining this moratorium." BOEM is planning to offer this area up for drilling once the moratorium expires.

H.R. 1941, introduced by Congressman Joe Cunningham (D-SC) and Congressman Francis Rooney (R-FL), would place a permanent moratorium on offshore oil and gas leasing in the Atlantic Ocean, Straits of Florida, and Pacific Ocean. H.R. 205, introduced by Congressman Rooney and Congresswoman Kathy Castor (D-FL), would amend GOMESA to make permanent the current moratorium in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico.

With your "YES" votes for these bills, you will stand united with East Coast and West Coast governors; over 2,100 elected officials from both parties and from all levels of government; 369 municipalities and counting; over 50,000 business interests; and over 500,000 fishing families—all on the record against expanded offshore drilling—as well as millions of Americans from all walks of life who depend on healthy coasts for their communities and livelihoods.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**Oceana**  
**Natural Resources Defense Council**  
**Alaska Wilderness Action**  
**Alaska's Big Village Network**  
**Audubon Society**  
**Cetacean Society International**  
**Clean Ocean Action**  
**Clean Water Action**  
**Climate Hawks Vote**  
**Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life**  
**Conservation Law Foundation**  
**Defenders of Wildlife**  
**Earth Law Center**  
**Earthjustice**  
**Environmental Defense Center**  
**Gotham Whale**  
**GreenLatinos**  
**Heal the Bay**  
**Healthy Gulf**  
**Inland Ocean Coalition**  
**International Fund for Animal Welfare**  
**International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute**  
**League of Conservation Voters**  
**Marine Conservation Institute**  
**National Audubon Society**  
**National Parks Conservation Association**  
**NY4WHALES**  
**Ocean Conservancy**  
**Ocean Conservation Research**  
**Oceanic Preservation Society**  
**Oil Change U.S.**  
**One Hundred Miles**  
**Save Our Shores**  
**Save the Manatee**  
**Sierra Club**  
**Southern Environmental Law Center**  
**The Wilderness Society**  
**Voices for Progress**