

May 2, 2022

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Angus King
United States Senate
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Collins and King,

Hospitality Maine is our state's only non-profit trade group representing the hospitality industry. We work to improve, promote, protect, and educate the lodging, restaurant, and hospitality industries here in Maine. We write you today to share our group's opposition to the expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling off the Atlantic coast. The protection of our coast from offshore drilling is critically important to Maine's economy, and we urge you to take every available opportunity to protect our waters from the expansion of drilling.

Maine's coastal waters support a tourism industry that lets our business owners share our state's beauty with the world, and a recreation industry that fuels visitors desire for outdoor adventure, and a fishing industry that creates good-paying jobs. Offshore drilling could devastate our 3,500 miles of coastline and the [60,000 Maine jobs and \\$3.8 billion in GDP](#) that rely on a clean coast and healthy oceans. The fishing, tourism, and coastal recreation industries would be at serious risk if oil rigs were allowed off our shores.

That is why nearly 400 municipalities and over 2,400 elected local, state, and federal officials have formally opposed offshore oil and gas drilling, including over 290 municipalities along the Atlantic Coast. Nearly every East Coast governor opposes offshore drilling, along with numerous fishing and tourism interests, including local chambers of commerce, tourism and restaurant associations, and alliances representing over 59,000 businesses.

We appreciate your past advocacy on this critical issue. Having both of Maine's Senators cosponsoring the New England Coastal Protection Act shows that Mainers are united in our support for permanent protections from offshore drilling.

Congress can and must act, and the budget reconciliation process currently underway is the best opportunity to enact these changes. The U.S. House of Representatives [has already passed](#) permanent protections for the Atlantic Ocean as part of their budget reconciliation package. Now the Senate must renew its commitment to protecting our coast.

Should the opportunity present itself, we urge you to vote to add the House's language, which would permanently protect the Atlantic, Pacific, and Eastern Gulf from new offshore oil drilling, to the Senate's version of the budget reconciliation bill. Permanently protecting Maine's coast from dirty and dangerous offshore drilling is an opportunity that cannot be passed by.

Thank you,

Matt Lewis, President, Hospitality Maine

Greg Dugal, Director of Government Affairs, Hospitality Maine