

July 25, 2023

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

Dear President Biden:

Thank you for the key actions you've taken on climate to date. We are state and local elected officials who have come together to urge you to take the next step for our climate, oceans, and frontline communities by issuing a final 2023–2028 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (“Five-Year Plan”) that prevents new lease sales. Dirty and dangerous offshore oil drilling threatens our communities and our environment while exacerbating the climate crisis.

Climate change is threatening our oceans, our coasts, and our planet, and new leasing for offshore drilling would [lock in](#) decades of climate-harming carbon emissions. An [analysis by Oceana](#) found that protecting all unleased federal waters from offshore drilling in the United States could prevent over 19 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions. That is the equivalent of taking every car in the nation off the road for 15 years and ending new leasing could prevent more than \$720 billion in damages to people, property, and the environment.

As you know, the devastating negative effects of oil and gas development on frontline communities are well documented. Drilling pollutes our air with [toxic emissions](#), causing asthma, lung cancer, and other diseases. For too long, the Gulf Coast has been the nation's sacrifice zone and Gulf communities have borne the brunt of the fallout from U.S. oil and gas drilling. Worse, oil companies already stockpiled millions of acres of our ocean for future offshore drilling. They are sitting on more than 8 million acres of unused leases, or about 75 percent of the total leased acreage of public waters. It's time to stop new offshore drilling and instead invest in a just transition to clean energy sources.

The 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill disaster killed eleven people and resulted in more than 200 million gallons of oil spewing into the Gulf of Mexico. Oil from the spill tarred hundreds of miles of Gulf coast shoreline stretching from Texas to Florida and devastated coastal economies. Losses to the seafood industry alone were estimated at nearly \$1 billion. The disaster had [deadly impacts](#) for dolphins, whales, sea turtles, and more.

President Biden, your Five-Year Plan represents the best opportunity to bring the management of our offshore federal resources into alignment with your climate goals. Preventing new dirty and dangerous offshore drilling in your final Five-Year Plan will protect coastal communities from devastating pollution, support healthy marine ecosystems, safeguard ocean wildlife, and encourage a clean energy future. Please issue a final 2023–2028 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (“Five-Year Plan”) with no new lease sales.

Sincerely,

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