

RESOLUTION NO. 68,161-N.S.

PROTECTING OUR OCEAN AND COAST FROM OFFSHORE DRILLING AND
FRACKING

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley values our state's ocean waters and coasts that provide habitat to a vast array of wildlife, including whales, sea turtles, birds, and fish that depend on a healthy and clean environment; and

WHEREAS, our city's residents and visitors enjoy California's ocean and beaches for recreational activities, and depend on them for tourism and to support coastal economies; and

WHEREAS, offshore oil and gas drilling off the Pacific coast puts these coastal resources at risk of oil spills and other environmental damage; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley opposes an expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling, fracking, and other well stimulation because of the threat to our coast, wildlife, and climate; and

WHEREAS, a massive oil spill in 1969 off the coast of Santa Barbara fouled coastal waters and caused catastrophic environmental damage, and in 2015 a pipeline servicing offshore oil platforms burst and fouled the coast, damaging wildlife and coastal recreation; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has taken recent steps to vastly expand offshore oil and gas leasing in the Pacific, Atlantic, Arctic oceans and the eastern Gulf of Mexico that have previously been largely off-limits to new federal leasing; and

WHEREAS, hydraulic fracturing and other unconventional oil extraction techniques such as acid fracturing, matrix acidizing, gravel packing, and cyclic steam injection collectively referred to here as "fracking and other well stimulation," provide another means to expand offshore oil and gas extraction off California's coast; and

WHEREAS, fracking and other well stimulation increases pollution and the risk of oil spills and earthquakes, and the offshore oil industry is permitted to dump more than nine billion gallons of wastewater into the Pacific every year—including wastewater from fracking that may be laced with toxic chemicals that can harm human health, wildlife, and larger ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, the State of California prohibits new leasing in state waters because of the unacceptably high risk of damage and disruption to the marine environment of the state; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of California, the State Senate, the State Lands Commission, and cities, including Los Angeles, have called for no new federal offshore leases in the

Pacific Ocean, and several municipalities have called for limits to onshore fracking including Marin County, Alameda County, Santa Cruz County, San Benito County, Butte County, and the City of San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, offshore drilling, fracking, and other well stimulation deepen our dependence on fossil fuels and undermine the state's efforts to address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and moving toward renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, President Donald J. Trump's America First Offshore Energy Executive Order could open the Pacific, Atlantic, Arctic oceans and the Eastern Gulf of Mexico to new drilling, fracking, and other well stimulation putting California's coastal resources at risk of more oil spills and climate change.


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley supports (1) a ban on new drilling, fracking, and other well stimulation in federal and state waters off the California coast, (2) no new federal oil and gas leases in the Pacific, Atlantic, Arctic oceans and the eastern Gulf of Mexico—areas currently protected from new leases; and 2) a rapid phase-out of all oil and gas extraction off the California coast on a rapid schedule sufficient to respond to the climate crisis.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on September 12, 2017 by the following vote:

Ayes: Bartlett, Davila, Droste, Hahn, Harrison, Maio, Wengraf, Worthington and Arreguin.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.


Jesse Arreguin, Mayor

Attest: 
Mark Numainville, City Clerk