

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 18, 2018

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

We write to express our strong opposition to the inclusion of lease sales in the Atlantic, Arctic, and Pacific Oceans, and Eastern Gulf of Mexico in the Draft 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (National OCS Program) that was announced on January 4, 2018. This draft plan elevates the interests of the oil and gas industry above all others, while ignoring public input, sound science, and the impacts of climate change on our environment. We urge you to return to the drawing board and remove the lease sales in the Atlantic, Arctic, and Pacific Oceans, and the Eastern Gulf of Mexico from the new National OCS Program.

Expanding drilling into the Atlantic, Arctic, and Pacific Oceans, and the Eastern Gulf of Mexico would put our coastal communities, businesses, oceans, and climate at grave risk. Oil spills would impact beaches and wildlife that depend on healthy oceans, wreaking havoc on ecosystems, local businesses, and residents alike.

History shows us that where we drill, we eventually spill. Our oceans have already suffered enough damage from the offshore oil and gas industry. More than four million gallons of oil have been spilled or leaked in the Pacific Ocean since 1969. In 2010, the *BP Deepwater Horizon* disaster caused a ten-year projected economic loss of \$8.7 billion in fisheries, including 22,000 lost jobs. In the Arctic, the Department of the Interior found a 75 percent chance of a major oil spill if drilling occurs in Chukchi Sea. Over the past eight years, 3 to 10 oil spills of 2,100 gallons or more have occurred each year, and smaller spills are numerous.

Fishing, tourism and recreation along the East Coast support nearly 1.4 million jobs and generate around \$95 billion in gross domestic product each year. Along the West Coast, similar activities generate around \$56 billion in gross domestic product and support more than 500,000 jobs annually. Expanded drilling off our coasts threatens all of that economic productivity and the jobs, families, and communities it sustains.

This Administration is pushing a damaging policy on Americans. The governors of New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, California, Oregon and Washington – representing both parties and both coasts – all are formally opposed to the President's plan for new leasing off their respective shores. More than 150 municipalities on the East Coast, West Coast, and Gulf of Mexico have passed resolutions opposing offshore oil and gas drilling and

and gas drilling and exploration. The New England, Mid-Atlantic, and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the Department of Defense, Air Force, Florida Defense Support Task Force, and NASA have all weighed in expressing serious concerns or opposition to offshore exploration and drilling. More than 41,000 businesses and 500,000 fishing families have also joined this overwhelming chorus of voices. This plan would turn a deaf ear to the valid concerns of these leaders and local citizens.

This National OCS Program puts our oceans, beaches, and coastal economies at risk. It is ill-conceived and short-sighted, putting the interests of the oil and gas industry ahead of coastal communities. We therefore oppose this plan in its entirety and urge you to remove the lease sales scheduled for the Atlantic, Arctic, and Pacific Oceans, and the Eastern Gulf of Mexico planning areas. We hope you will heed the calls of the American people to promptly withdraw this plan.

Sincerely,



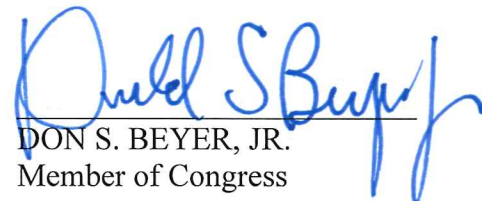
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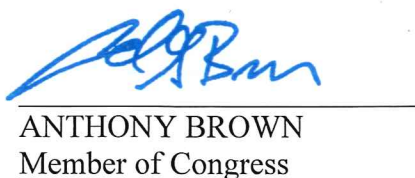
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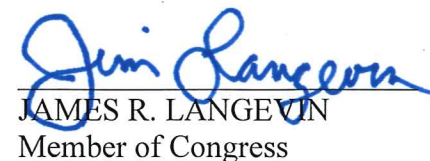
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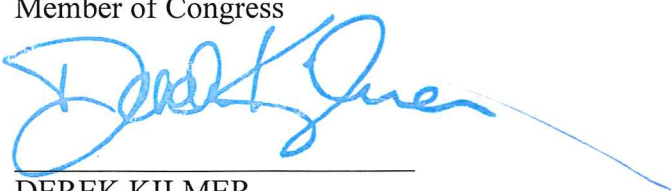
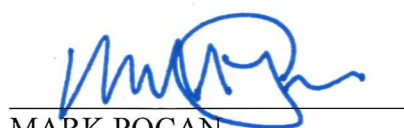
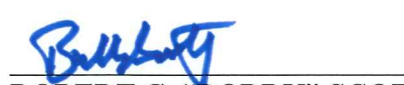

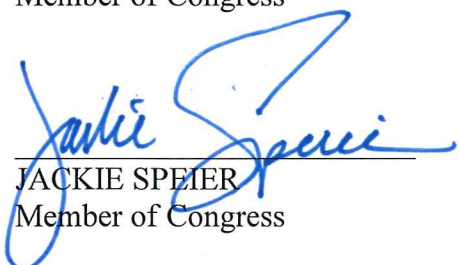
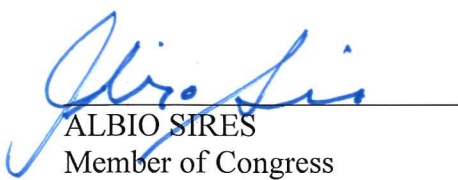


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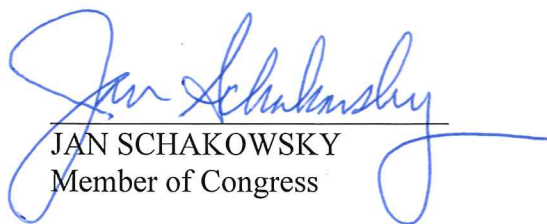
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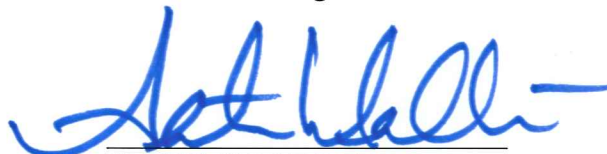

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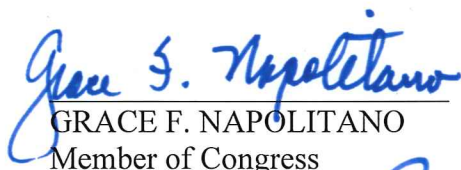
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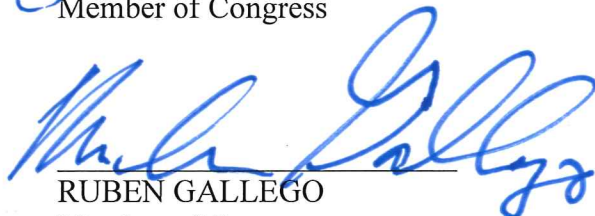
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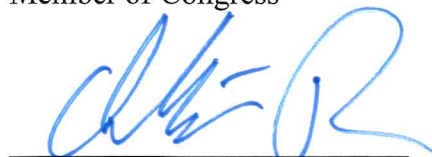
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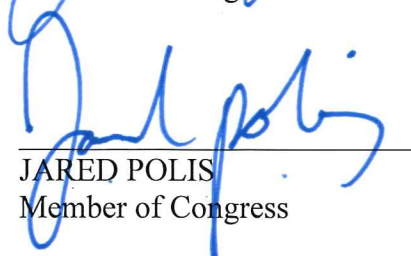
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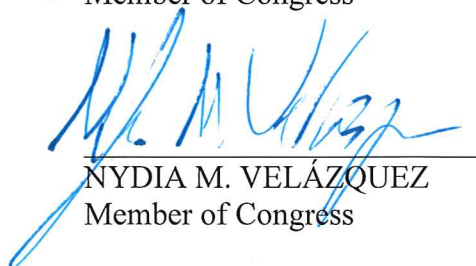
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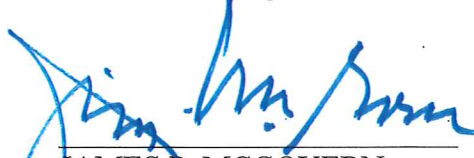
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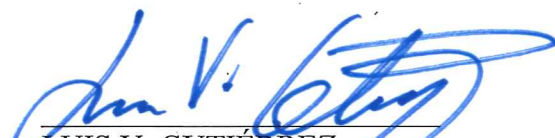
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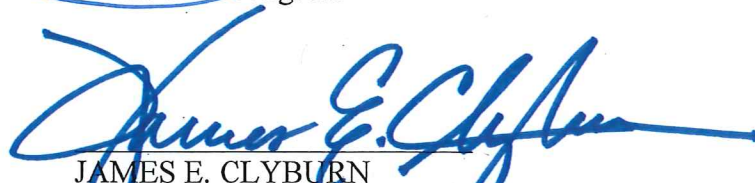

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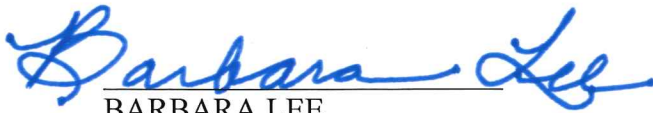

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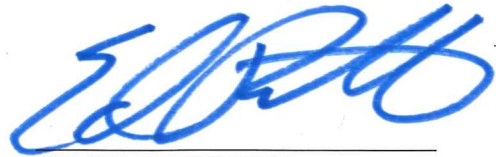

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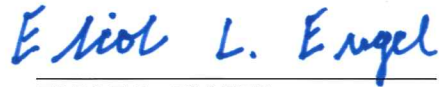
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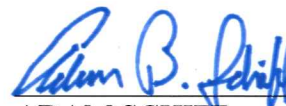
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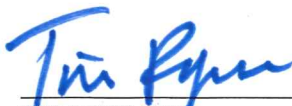
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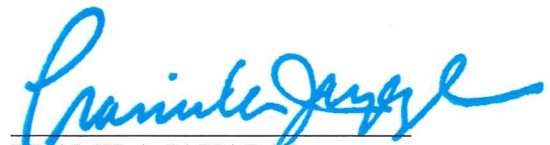
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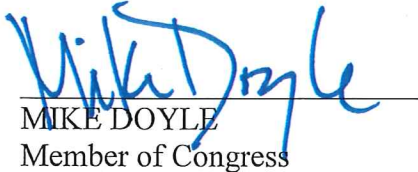
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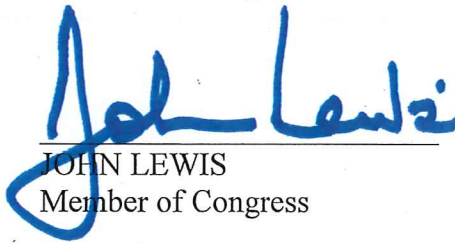
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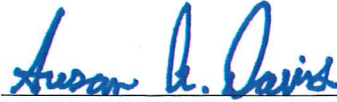
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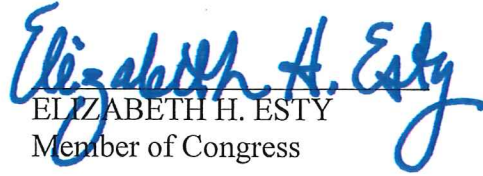
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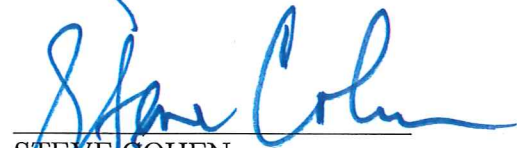
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