

BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS CAPE MAY COUNTY, NEW JERSEY RESOLUTION

No. 57-18

RESOLUTION OPPOSING OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS ACTIVITIES

WHEREAS, on January 8, 2018, the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announced in the Federal Register Notice the release of their Draft Proposed Program (DPP) for the 2019-2024 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. BOEM is requesting public comment on the DPP as well as formal scoping for a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the 2019-2024 Program; and

WHEREAS, this new plan includes the entire Atlantic Ocean from Maine to Florida, including the waters off New Jersey within 3 miles of beaches, as well as including other ocean areas totaling some 90% of US ocean waters; and

WHEREAS, the physical, hydrodynamic, and biological characteristics of the ocean off the Jersey Shore are unique in the world, as more than 300 species of fish, nearly 350 species of birds, 5 species of sea turtles, and many marine mammals such as 20 species of whales and dolphins, 1 species of porpoise, and 4 species of seals, frequent this region. Nine endangered species, four of which are whales, can be found in these ocean waters, including the Atlantic Right Whale, one of the world's most endangered marine mammals. The region also serves as an essential migratory pathway for many of these species; and

WHEREAS, the Jersey Shore sustains the economy of the region with its bounty of natural resources and intrinsic values for millions of people through tourism. Tourism brings more than \$44 billion to NJ's economy each year and provides jobs to more than 500,000 people; and

WHEREAS, recreational and commercial fisheries in NJ provide enormous economic benefits, including revenue, food production, and recreational activities. In 2014, recreational fishing supported nearly 20,000 jobs and resulted in \$2 billion of retail sales. Commercial fishing supports nearly 7,300 jobs and provides \$152 million in landings, not including restaurant and retail sales; and

WHEREAS, current estimates of the amount of technically recoverable oil off the entire Atlantic coast from Maine to Florida would only last the nation approximately 229 days, and the amount of technically recoverable gas would only last approximately 562 days; and

WHEREAS, offshore oil and gas development, causes substantial environmental impacts, including: (a) onshore damage due to infrastructure, (b) water pollution from drilling muds and the water brought-up from a well with oil and gas (called "produced waters"), (c) noise from seismic surveys, (d) air pollution, and (e) oil spills; and

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WHEREAS, the harmful environmental consequences of offshore oil and gas exploration and development are serious and threatens the environmental and economic assets of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the BP Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico (2010) is clear evidence of the dangers associated with offshore drilling, including costing the lives of 11 people, devastating coastal economies and countless livelihoods, and killing countless marine animals, as well as continuing to cause harm to marine life as documented by a steady flow of studies; and

WHEREAS, within 5 days of the release of the DPP Governor Scott from Florida was able to convince Department of Interior Secretary Zinke to remove Florida from further consideration for drilling due to the importance of coastal tourism to that state and New Jersey shares this same economic dependence on tourism and clean ocean economies; and

WHEREAS, bi-partisan opposition against drilling off the New Jersey coast has included every Governor since 1985, and a majority of the congressional delegation and most coastal towns; and

WHEREAS, coastal municipalities have a profound interest in maintaining strong federal protections for our nation's coastal environment, as well as the economic and social benefits it supports.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Cape May County hereby opposes offshore oil and gas exploration and drilling activities that would affect the coast of New Jersey, and calls upon Secretary of the Interior Ryan K. Zinke who oversees the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to withdraw New Jersey and the entire Atlantic Ocean from consideration for the offshore oil and gas exploration, development, or drilling.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution be served upon Ryan K. Zinke, Secretary of the Interior, Governor Phil Murphy, President of the Senate, Orrin Hatch, Cape May County Legislative Delegation, and all New Jersey Boards of Chosen Freeholders.

STATEMENT

This Resolution is in opposition of offshore oil and gas activities.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY } ss.: _____
COUNTY OF CAPE MAY }

I, Elizabeth Bozzelli, Clerk of the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Cape May, State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct and true copy of a resolution adopted by the Board at a meeting duly held on the 23rd day of _____

January _____, 2018.

Freeholders	RECORD OF VOTE				
	Ayes	Nayes	Absent	Moved	Second
Mr. Desiderio	✓			✓	
Ms. Hayes	✓				✓
Mr. Morey	✓				
Mr. Pierson	✓				
Mr. Thornton	✓				
✓ - Indicates Vote Moved-Resolution Offered Second-Resolution Seconded					

Signed, _____

Elizabeth Bozzelli
Clerk of the Board of