

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

February 1, 2018

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary, U. S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

We write to express our strong opposition to inclusion of Pacific Northwest waters in the Trump Administration's National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2019-2024. The states of Washington and Oregon have made clear through local, state, and federal action, as well as extensive public comment, that oil and gas lease sales off the Pacific Coast are not in the best interest of our economies or environment. The Department of the Interior's proposal to consider drilling off the states we represent, absent stakeholder support and directly contradicting economic and environmental factors of the region, is a waste of time, government resources, and taxpayer dollars.

The importance of marine resources to our regional economy and the level of local opposition to offshore oil and gas development cannot be overstated. The coasts of Washington and Oregon are home to numerous seafood and tourism-dependent coastal communities. Washington state supports a \$50 billion dollar maritime economy and 191,000 maritime related jobs. Oregon's commercial fisheries contributed over \$500 million in personal income to the state in 2016, with an economic impact of more than \$2.1 billion. In Oregon, coastal tourism alone generates \$1.9 billion in revenues and supports over 20,000 jobs. An oil spill off our shores would jeopardize jobs in commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries, employment in the seafood processing industry, a robust tourism and recreation economy, a historic shipbuilding industry, and the clean water required for critical regional and international trade and transportation routes.

There is a reason it has been decades since the waters off the coasts of Washington and Oregon have been considered for oil and gas leasing. Voluminous existing information documents the lack of oil and gas resources; absence of oil and gas industry interest; strong state and local opposition as expressed through laws, goals and policies of affected states; other uses of the waters to support our coastal economies that conflict with oil and gas activities; and extreme environmental and ecological risks.

From healthy beaches serving as tourism hubs on the coast, to the 3,188 square mile pristine Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, protecting our sustainable marine resources is a priority for our states. As you finalize the Draft National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2019-2024, we urge you to remove the Washington/Oregon planning area.

Thank you for your attention to this matter which is of the upmost importance to our constituents.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Dave Reichert
Member of Congress



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



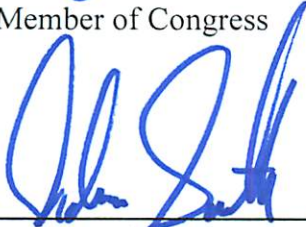
Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress



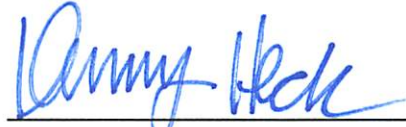
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



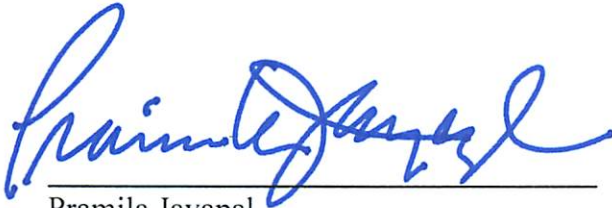
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



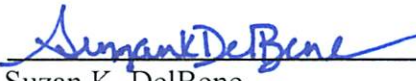
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Denny Heck
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress