

COUNTY OF Horry)
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)

RESOLUTION R-90-17

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING COUNTY COUNCIL'S OPPOSITION TO SEISMIC AIRGUN BLASTING AND OFFSHORE DRILLING IN THE ATLANTIC AND COASTAL WATERS OF SOUTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Interior/Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is in the process of opening the mid and south Atlantic to exploration and development of offshore oil and gas, which will include the use of methods such as seismic air-gun blasting; and

WHEREAS, according to a recent Coastal Carolina University report, tourism in the Grand Strand (Horry and Georgetown counties) is the region's number one industry, having an economic impact of approximately seven billion dollars, and supporting more than 83,000 jobs, representing over 50% of total employment across the Grand Strand; and

WHEREAS, according to a recent American Sportfishing Association study, saltwater fishing in South Carolina had a total economic impact of over \$1.3 billion dollars, employed nearly twenty thousand South Carolinians, and generated over four hundred thirty-one million dollars in salary and wages; and

WHEREAS, both tourism and recreational and commercial saltwater fishing are vital to the coastal economy of South Carolina and Horry County; and

WHEREAS, four sea turtle species nest on South Carolina beaches, classified as endangered or threatened and protected under the Endangered Species Act, with State and local government and their citizens working together for sea turtle preservation and protection in Horry and Georgetown counties, as well as their protection in open ocean waters which is also essential to survival; and

WHEREAS, seismic air-gun blasting, used to search for oil and gas deposits beneath the ocean floor, generates explosive and sustained sound for months on end, and can disrupt and harm marine mammals, sea turtles, fish and other wildlife; and

WHEREAS, offshore drilling historically has caused billions of dollars of damage and environmental harm on every coast of the United States where such drilling has been permitted, due to oil spills, wastewater, and required on shore infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, seismic blasting alone is likely to cause severe economic hardship to the State of South Carolina, its coastal counties, adversely impact those citizens and guests who either earn their livelihoods from fishing or come to our area to enjoy the sport or diversion of fishing, and increase costs or reduce availability to those who purchase or consume these fish, all at a time when economic job creation and retention is a priority for the State and this Council; and

WHEREAS, just one spill or Deepwater Horizon incident could stigmatize the Grand Strand, and threaten the very existence of our economy, both local and state-wide; and

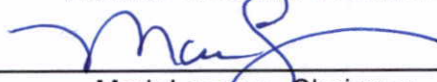
WHEREAS, this threat spurred each municipality along the shoreline in Horry County to pass a resolution in 2015 staunchly opposing seismic blasting and offshore drilling, including the City of Myrtle Beach, the City of North Myrtle Beach, the Town of Surfside Beach, the Town of Atlantic Beach and the Town of Briarcliffe Acres; and

WHEREAS, County Council is informed and believes that that the slight and speculative benefit of oil and gas exploration and drilling which would likely accrue to the global energy market is not worth the risk of even a single incident that would cripple our local and state-wide economy.

NOW, THEREFORE, by the power and authority granted to the Horry County Council by the Constitution of the State of South Carolina and the powers granted to the County by the General Assembly of the State, be it resolved that Horry County opposes off shore exploration and drilling along the coast of South Carolina and in the waters of the Atlantic Ocean adjacent thereto.

AND IT IS SO RESOLVED this 22nd day of August, 2017

HORRY COUNTY COUNCIL

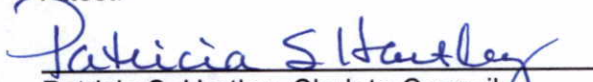


Mark Lazarus, Chairman

Harold G. Worley, District 1
Bill Howard, District 2
Dennis DiSabato, District 3
Gary Loftus, District 4
Tyler Servant, District 5
Cam Crawford, District 6

Harold Phillips, District 7
Johnny Vaught, District 8
W. Paul Prince, District 9
Danny Hardee, District 10
Al Allen, District 11

Attest:



Patricia S. Hartley, Clerk to Council