

May 22, 2016

Secretary Zinke
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke,

On behalf of the millions of Americans we represent, we write in opposition to expanded oil and gas drilling and seismic testing in public waters off our nation's coasts. Offshore drilling brings unacceptable risks to our oceans, coastal residents, communities, existing economies, and our climate.

Our oceans belong to us—the American people—and should be preserved and protected, not turned over to private companies for their short-term and short-sighted financial gain. Our future depends on clean renewable energy, not sacrificing our precious waters for oil that harms our families' health and pollutes our oceans.

Expanding drilling into our Arctic, Atlantic, Eastern Gulf of Mexico and Pacific waters—still largely unspoiled by drilling's inherent hazards and harms—would put our coastal residents, businesses, oceans, and climate at grave risk. Exposing the Gulf of Mexico to additional drilling would further burden residents with the pollution and risks that have already caused great, lasting harm to the region.

Expanded drilling will only exacerbate climate change, locking in decades of carbon pollution and contributing to the sea level rise, increased asthma attacks, and extreme weather that come from carbon pollution. It also threatens to oil the beaches and wildlife that depend on a healthy ocean, wreaking havoc on ecosystems and local businesses and residents alike. The seismic airgun testing that often precedes offshore oil and gas development is so loud that it injures or kills marine life, including imperiled sea mammals and important fisheries.

The fossil fuel industry has already stockpiled many decades' worth of oil. We simply do not need to put our precious ocean heritage at risk, just to perpetuate their dirty energy business. Instead, we must make smarter energy choices for our future by investing more in renewable sources, such as wind and solar power and efficiency, that are clean, provide good jobs, and create real, positive, global leadership for America. Clean energy is now the fastest-growing and cheapest source of power in the country. Far more Americans want to preserve our oceans than sell them to oil companies to exploit. Forsaking our oceans for more drilling will only leave us vulnerable to disasters that put at risk our oceans, beaches, marine life, and the livelihood of the millions who depend on healthy oceans for fishing, recreation, and tourism dollars.

Finally, our country's recent moves to reduce the footprint and risks of offshore drilling as we clean up our energy act are the result of a painstaking, multi-year public review process that documented a groundswell of bipartisan support for a new direction. They represent a foundation that should be built upon, not rejected at the behest of a handful of private oil companies.

We urge you to respect the local residents, businesses, and millions of Americans who have already made clear their support for preserving, not drilling off our nation's beaches.

Sincerely,

350 Louisiana

American Bird Conservancy

Aquamarine Studio

Assateague Coastal Trust

Buddhist Climate Action Network

Center for Biological Diversity

Clean Water Action

Clean Water Action Connecticut

Clean Water Action Maryland

Clean Water Action New Jersey

Clean Water Action Texas

Colorado Interfaith Power and Light

Conservation Law Foundation

Defenders of Wildlife

Delaware Riverkeeper Network

Earth Action, Inc.

Alaska Wilderness League

Aqua Terra Aeris Law Group

Arizona Interfaith Power & Light

BlueWaveNJ

California Coastkeeper Alliance

Citizens Coalition for a Safe
Community

Clean Water Action California

Clean Water Action Florida

Clean Water Action Massachusetts

Clean Water Action Rhode Island

Clean Water Action Virginia

Connecticut League of Conservation
Voters

Conservation Voters of South Carolina

Delaware Interfaith Power & Light

Democratic Women's Club of Collier
County

Earth Ethics, Inc.

Earthjustice	Earthworks
Elders Climate Action	Environment America
Environment Florida	Environment Georgia
Environment Georgia	Environment Massachusetts
Environment New Jersey	Environmental Defense Center
Environmental League of Massachusetts	Food & Water Watch
Frack Free Butte County	fractivist.org
Franciscan Action Network	Friends of the Earth
Friends of the San Juans	Gas Free Seneca
Great Old Broads for Wilderness	Green America
Greenpeace USA	Gulf Restoration Network
Hands Across the Sand / Land	Harvey Mudd College
Hawaii Interfaith Power and Light	Jewish Climate Action Network
League of Conservation Voters	League of Women Voters of the United States
Lizzie Of Earth	Maine Conservation Voters
Maryland Conservation Council, Inc.	Maryland League of Conservation Voters
Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light	Matanzas Riverkeeper
Mission Blue	Natural Resources Defense Council
Nature Coast Conservation, Inc	Nevada Conservation League
New Jersey LCV	New York Interfaith Power & Light
NextGen Climate	North Carolina Conservation Network
North Carolina League of Conservation Voters	Northern Alaska Environmental Center

NY/NJ Baykeeper	Ocean Conservation Research
Oceana	Oceana
Oceanic Preservation Society (OPS)	Ogeechee Riverkeeper
Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund	Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
Oil Change International	Operation HomeCare, Inc.
Orca Conservancy	Oregon League of Conservation Voters
Pacific Justice and Reconciliation Center	Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Water and Air
Rainforest Action Network	Rhode Island Interfaith Power and Light
Rootskeeper	Sandy Hook Sea Life Foundation (SSF)
Savannah Coffee Party	Savannah Riverkeeper
Save Our Shores	Save the Sespe
Sierra Club	Sierra Club California
Social Action Committee, Ahavath Beth Israel, Boise, Idaho	Stand.earth
Steps Coalition	Stone Crab Alliance
Students for a Just and Stable Future	Sunshine State Interfaith Power & Light
Surfrider Foundation	Surfrider Foundation Georgia Chapter
SWFL Justice4All Coalition	Tennessee Interfaith Power & Light
The Responsible Growth Management Coalition, Inc.	The Shalom Center
The Wilderness Society	True North Tutoring
Turtle Island Restoration Network	Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of New Jersey
Unitarian Universalist Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network (UUPLAN)	Vanishing Earth
Virginia Conservation Network	Virginia League of Conservation Voters

Walk For Mother Earth

Washington Conservation Voters

Waterkeeper Alliance

Waterkeepers Chesapeake

Wes Gillingham

West Virginia Interfaith Power and
Light

Whale and Dolphin Conservation

Winkler/Rogers family household

Wisconsin Interfaith Power & Light

Women's March on Washington

WV Citizen Action Group

WV Environmental Council

www.2nwindproject.com

Cc: Senator Lisa Murkowski, Chairwoman, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural
Resources

Senator Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural
Resources

Representative Rob Bishop, Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources

Representative Raul Grijalva, Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural
Resources