

January 18, 2018

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

Dear Secretary Zinke:

As Members of the California congressional delegation, we write in strong opposition to the Department of the Interior's National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Draft Proposed Program (DPP) for 2019 to 2024 and its inclusion of lease sales in the Pacific. We urge you to immediately withdraw the DPP for 2019 to 2024.

On January 9, you announced that you would remove Florida's coasts from consideration in the 2019 to 2024 DPP. In doing so you noted that Florida's coasts "are highly reliant on tourism as an economic driver" and that you believed it was important to take into account "the local and state voice." Using that rationale, California must also be removed from the DPP, given the high level of local opposition and the reliance of California communities on tourism.

California coasts are highly reliant on tourism as an economic driver. In fact, California's ocean economy and the sector dependent on tourism and recreation are both larger than those of Florida. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in 2014, the ocean economy contributed \$41.9 billion to California's gross domestic product, nearly half of which came from the tourism and recreation industries. California's ocean economy is unique and so important that in 2015 the federal government did an entire study showing the important of it not just to California, but to our nation.

California and other states also cannot afford to allow expanded offshore drilling that will threaten the vitality of these industries. In 1969, we saw the Santa Barbara oil spill spew approximately 4.2 million gallons of oil into the ocean, devastating recreation, property, the fishing industry, and wildlife. If we open the Pacific to additional leases, it is not a question of if, but when the next disaster will occur.

You noted that your decision to exclude Florida was due in part to the concerns of Florida government officials. We agree that this decision must consider "local and state voices," but this sudden exemption to Florida, without any action to address the previous opposition from the state of California, makes a mockery of the requirements of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands

Act. Last week, the governors of California, Oregon and Washington again issued a statement expressing our states' firm opposition to the expansion of oil and gas leases in the Pacific. Additionally, dozens of Members of Congress from California, Oregon, and Washington sent you a letter in August 2017 conveying the same position. Under your rationale, California and other similarly situated states must also be exempted from the Five-Year Plan. Otherwise, this appears to be a purely politically-motivated decision.

Exempting only Florida from the DPP lacks rational basis and is arbitrary and capricious. It is unlikely that there exists a legal standard that would allow you to exempt Florida but not California under the rationale you already set forth and put in writing.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress

Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Karen Bass
Member of Congress

Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
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J. Luis Correa
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Susan Davis
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Mark DeSaulnier
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Anna G. Eshoo
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John Garamendi
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Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
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Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard
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Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff
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Brad Sherman
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Jackie Speier
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Eric Swalwell
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Mark Takano
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Juan Vargas
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Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress