

Resolve 7-17/18
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CITY OF PORTLAND
IN THE CITY COUNCIL

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**RESOLUTION OPPOSING OIL AND GAS OFFSHORE DRILLING
OFF THE COAST OF MAINE**

WHEREAS, the 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program excluded the Atlantic coast of the United States to protect the coastline from the danger of oil spills; and

WHEREAS, that protection remains vital to ensure the environmental and economic health of coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, by Presidential Executive Order 1395, The President of the United States directed the Secretary of the Interior to consider revising the schedule of proposed oil and gas lease sales in the 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program; and

WHEREAS, in response, the Draft Proposed Program issued by the Secretary of the Interior for the 2019-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program makes more than 98 percent of the Outer Continental Shelf of the United States available for oil and gas drilling, including the North Atlantic area off the coast of Maine for leasing in 2021 and 2023; and

WHEREAS, offshore drilling may require significant onshore infrastructure, such as pipelines or refineries, which would harm the character of Portland's coastline and could exacerbate wetlands loss and storm surges and sea level rise; and

WHEREAS, offshore oil and gas drilling and exploration places coastal communities at economic and ecological risk from oil spills and the pollution brought by routine drilling operations and onshore industrialization; and

WHEREAS, opening the Atlantic Ocean to offshore oil and gas drilling and exploration, includes the use of seismic airguns, which fire intense blasts of compressed air that rank just behind military explosives as the loudest source of noise in the ocean, every 10-12 seconds, 24 hours a day, for months on end, and could injure the ocean life including whales that have been inhabiting the offshore waters of Maine for millennia; and,

WHEREAS, seismic airgun blasting to explore for oil and gas deposits has been proven to disrupt and displace sea creatures and mammals that rely on sound to find food, migrate, and mate, and can impair the health of many fish and shellfish species, including those of commercial importance like squid, lobster, and scallops; and

WHEREAS, seismic noise testing has been shown to reduce commercial fish catches by up to 70 percent; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of Portland, Maine, is committed to sustaining and improving its natural environment, to protecting its beautiful coastline from pollution and working to ameliorate climate change by promoting energy efficiency; and

WHEREAS, Portland residents and tourists alike visit the waterfront and the Casco Bay islands to see the clean, blue water of Casco Bay and take ferries, schooners, and other water craft to enjoy the beauty of the coastal waters; and

WHEREAS, Portland's commercial fishery is of crucial importance to its vitality and economy and;

WHEREAS, more than one hundred and forty local Atlantic coast town and city governments have passed resolutions opposing offshore drilling, to protect their coastlines, their fisheries, and their tourism and recreational economies,

WHEREAS, on January 8, 2018, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management began accepting comments on this Draft Proposed Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Portland City Council and Mayor oppose any plan or legislation that would open the coast of Maine to offshore drilling for gas and oil; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Portland City Council and Mayor request that the offshore areas of the City of Portland, Maine be excluded from the 2019-2024 Outer Continental Shelf Draft Proposed Oil and Gas Leasing Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be sent to Donald Trump, President of the United States, to the Department of the Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, to the National Oil and Gas Leasing Program Development and Coordination Branch Chief Kelly Hammerele, to the President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, to each Member of the Maine Congressional Delegation, to the Attorney General of Maine, the local United States Attorney's Office, and the Governor of Maine.