

March 6, 2015

RE: Offshore Drilling Proposal Public Hearing Scheduled

Dear Mayor:

On January 27, 2015, U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) Secretary Sally Jewell announced a [Draft Proposed Program \(DPP\)](#) for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM's) 2017-2022 off-shore oil and gas drilling program. The DPP schedules 14 potential lease sales for the 2017–2022 period in eight program areas – 10 sales in the Gulf of Mexico, one in the Atlantic (which would cover portions of two planning areas) and three off the coast of Alaska.

On behalf of their colleagues in municipal office, up and down New Jersey's maritime coast; on behalf of the workers and businesspeople whose livelihood depends on the health of our coastal waters; on behalf of the millions of visitors who annually visit our ocean and bay beaches for rest and recreation; and on behalf of the millions who count on our salt water fisheries for nourishment and enjoyment; League President, Mayor Brian Wahler of Piscataway, and a number of members of our Executive Board wrote to Secretary Jewell, to register objections to the plan to permit oil and gas exploration on a site, yet to be determined, somewhere off the shores of our southern Atlantic Coast neighbors.

This latest proposal in the development of the Nation's Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2017-2022 will put at risk a fragile and priceless ecosystem that supports an irreplaceable and diverse array of marine life. Further, Atlantic Coast drilling will jeopardize New Jersey's \$38 billion tourist industry, which has just begun to recover from the havoc wreaked by Superstorm Sandy. Tourism in New Jersey provides 312,000 jobs to our Garden State friends and neighbors. These could also be lost when faulty drilling operations, sabotage or a natural disaster result in a spill.

We cannot support such a risk. We, therefore, joined U.S. Senators Bob Menendez and Cory Booker, New Jersey Congressmen Frank Pallone and Frank LoBiondo and a chorus of other responsible leaders at all level of government in urging DOI to withdraw this proposal. Thanks to the efforts of Senators Menendez and Booker and Congressmen Pallone and LoBiondo, BOEM has agreed to schedule a public hearing in our State, in order to give the people of New Jersey the opportunity to weigh in on this matter.

Senator Menendez's Office has advised us that the hearing has been scheduled for:

The Sheraton Atlantic City Hotel
Atlantic City, NJ
Wednesday, March 18, 2015
3:00 PM – 7:00 PM

We encourage all municipalities to send a representative to this hearing. The BOEM and the DOI need to hear from you. Details on the hearing will follow shortly.

Very truly yours,

William G. Dressel, Jr.
Executive Director