

January XX, 2021

Walter Cruickshank, Ph.D.
Acting Director
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Acting Director Cruickshank:

On behalf of the City of Huntington Beach, we would like to express our opposition to opening up oil and gas drilling off the Southern California coast through the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's proposed National Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program. We applaud the recent Biden Administration action to pause new leases for offshore drilling, and urge that more consideration be given to local needs in areas surrounding proposed oil drilling.

The City of Huntington Beach values our ocean waters and coastline, which provide habitat to an array of wildlife including marine mammals, birds, and fish. Our ocean and beaches also help attract millions of annual visitors to the City for recreation, entertainment, and relaxation. Our local economy is dependent on coastal tourism and the health of our marine ecosystem.

While we are heartened by the current pause on new offshore drilling leases, we are concerned that any reconsideration of lease sales off the Southern California coast in the future would put these coastal resources at risk of oil spills and further damage. Previous offshore oil and gas leasing off the California coast has resulted in oil spills that caused environmental devastation and hurt localities dependent on coastal tourism.

If offshore drilling should return, we propose that the Southern California region receive the same waiver to exempt additional lease sales as the State of Florida received from the previous administration. Previously, the State of Florida was removed from consideration in the Bureau's draft proposal due to the state's reliance on coastal tourism. We request that any federal actions be consistent in this nature, and request that our coastline should also be exempt from any new oil or gas leasing if the proposed program should be revisited.

As the Bureau pauses its new National OCS Program, we urge you to take the time allotted to work with coastal communities like the City of Huntington Beach to develop a national energy strategy that does not jeopardize the wellbeing of our local economies and the protection of our marine ecosystem. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Kim Carr
Mayor
City of Huntington Beach, California

Cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Alex Padilla
Representative Michelle Steel