



Legislation Text

File #: 19-116, Version: 1

TO: Mayor and Commissioners
FROM: Ana Puszkin-Chevlin, City Manager's Office
THROUGH: Mark R. Lauzier, City Manager
DATE: February 5, 2019

RESOLUTION NO. 45-19 IN OPPOSITION TO OFFSHORE DRILLING ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING SEISMIC AIRGUN BLASTING, DUE TO NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS.

Recommended Action:

Motion to approve resolution opposing offshore drilling activities and seismic air gun blasts and direct the City Clerk to submit copies of the Resolution to Senators Rubio and Scott, Governor DeSantis and President Donald Trump.

Background:

Back in January of 2018, the Trump administration announced plans to open nearly all US waters, including those on both Florida coasts to offshore drilling activities. Adamant opposition to these activities from environmental groups and state legislators prompted then Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to state that Florida would be exempt, but this exemption never materialized. On November 30, 2018 the Federal Government issued the Incidental Harm Authorization, allowing the seismic blasting for oil deposit exploration to go forward.

Oil drilling activities pose a significant threat to the state's coastal environment and associated coastal and tourism economy. The seismic blasting, (extremely loud, repetitive underwater sonic blasts used to map the layers of sea floor) negatively impact marine mammals' (whale and dolphin) communications, sea turtle migratory activities, and fish schools feeding and traveling patterns (See Exhibit A). Oil spills from petroleum exploration, extraction and transportation activities often contaminate coastal waters, beaches, sometimes with catastrophic consequences, and would likely transform the nature of local shore and port activities. In Florida, offshore oil drilling threatens to impact 609,000 jobs and over \$37 billion in state annual GDP related to fishing, tourism and recreation (see Exhibit B). As a coastal community, Delray Beach's character and prosperity, including 3 million beach visitors and 400,000 hotel room nights, are directly tied to preserving the ecology and pristine conditions of our coastlines. In addition, supporting investment in searching for additional fossil fuel repositories is viewed as running counter to advancing zero-emission energy sources, technologies need to meet global goals on CO2 reduction.

In accordance with our Goal 2.2 of Delray Beach's Strategic Plan, to "Pursue a comprehensive approach to local and environmental sustainability issues", staff believes it is important to voice opposition to offshore drilling activities, and stand in solidarity with 72 Florida coastal municipalities, and an additional 171 national jurisdictions that could be impacted by these petroleum activities.

City Attorney Review:

Approved as to form and legal sufficiency.

Funding Source/Financial Impact:

There is no financial costs associated with this resolution.

Timing of Request:

It would be ideal to support the resolution before the 2019 state legislative session.