

Dear Governor McCrory,

As small business owners, stakeholders and employees of the tourism industry along the North Carolina coast, we urge you to rescind all plans to drill off our shores.

Our coasts are lined with beaches visited by 11.6 million people annually, national wildlife refuges, parks and sensitive marshes and bays. They support a robust fishing and tourism industry, hundreds of miles of beaches and marsh environments, and important ocean ecosystems.

For the sake of our beaches, coastal communities and the significant boon coastal tourism provides to our economy, we the undersigned local business leaders are strongly opposed to drilling for oil off the Atlantic Coast, and we are calling on you to remove any proposals to do so from the 2017-2022 Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

Offshore drilling is incompatible with our tourism and fishing industries. When you drill, you spill, and day-to-day drilling operations result in chronic pollution and the industrialization of the coast for oil facilities. Look no further than the devastation the BP Deepwater Horizon catastrophe brought to the Gulf of Mexico's fishing, tourism and wildlife to recognize the impact drilling could have here on the Atlantic Coast.

The potential economic losses that new offshore drilling would bring to our existing coastal economies and the potential for damage to treasured coasts and marine resources would be devastating. Tourism in coastal North Carolina generates more than \$1.6 billion in revenue and supports more than 50,000 jobs in the leisure and hospitality industry alone (2013).

Commercial and recreational fishing in the Atlantic produces roughly \$93.8 million in direct dockside value for North Carolina and \$178 million in total economic activity (2012). Our clean beaches, coasts and oceans are worth too much to risk to the dangers of offshore drilling.

Additionally, according to the Energy Information Administration, there is only about 209 days worth of oil and 13 months worth of natural gas in the Atlantic Ocean. The potential short-term economic gain drilling would bring to our economy is not worth sacrificing the immense and sustained value our coastal tourism and fishing industries bring to Atlantic Coast states and the entire United States.

From our local businesses to bustling boardwalks and populated beaches, it is no wonder families frequent our beaches and people come from all over to experience the wonders of the Atlantic Coast.

Our coasts are worth much more wild. Rather than exposing our beaches, families and businesses to the inherent risks of drilling, we need to move this country in the direction of renewable energy. Thus we are calling on you to halt plans to drill off the Atlantic coast.

Signed,