

PATRICK M. O'NEIL
MAYOR

TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND



TOWN COUNCIL
JERRY KAYNARD, MAYOR PRO TEM
CHAUNCEY CLARK
HARTLEY COOPER
SUSAN MIDDLEAUGH
MARY JANE WATSON

ANDY BENKE
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
JASON BLANTON
COMPTROLLER
LAWRENCE A. DODDS
TOWN ATTORNEY
GREG GRESS
WATER AND SEWER MANAGER
JOE HENDERSON
ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
DANIEL S. HOWARD
CHIEF OF POLICE
ELLEN MILLER
TOWN CLERK
RANDY ROBINSON
BUILDING OFFICIAL
M. ANTHONY STITH
FIRE CHIEF

A RESOLUTION

TO EXPRESS THE TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA'S OPPOSITION TO SEISMIC TESTING AND OFFSHORE DRILLING ACTIVITIES

WHEREAS, the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is currently in the process of trying to open the mid-Atlantic Ocean to exploration and development of offshore oil and gas including risky methods, such as seismic blasting; and,

WHEREAS, seismic air-guns fire intense blasts of compressed air, one of the loudest human-made sounds in the ocean. These dynamite-like blasts can occur as frequently as every ten seconds, for days to weeks at a time and are loud enough to harm marine and aquatic life; and,

WHEREAS, the full impacts of seismic testing and offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean are not yet fully understood by scientists, the oil and gas industry, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management or the Federal Government, and lower-impact alternative technologies may be available for exploration in the near future; and,

WHEREAS, exploratory and commercial drilling, extraction, and transportation of offshore oil and gas resources pose a significant risk of spill; and,

WHEREAS, eventual offshore drilling may require significant onshore infrastructure, such as pipelines or refineries, which may harm the character of our coast, and

WHEREAS, offshore drilling activities pose threats for coastal wetland areas of the Town of Sullivan's Island, which are of intrinsic ecological value for numerous migratory bird species, serve as essential nursery habitats for recreational and commercially important fisheries, and act as natural buffers from storm surge and hurricanes; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Sullivan's Island endeavors to be a good steward of its coastal environment and its resources; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Sullivan's Island believes that more research should be done to fully understand and to better address the impacts of seismic testing and the options for mitigating those impacts before exploration begins, including incorporation of the National Marine Fisheries Service's soon-to-be-released acoustic guidance document; and,

WHEREAS, the exploration and development of oil and natural gas off the mid-Atlantic coast will not effectively or fully address the long-term energy needs of our country; and,

WHEREAS, the Town feels it would be more economically and ecologically responsible to pursue non-polluting sources of renewable energy through solar, wind, and biomass energy production projects that pose less risk to our coastal environment and economic health before using uncertain methods of seismic blasting for offshore oil and gas exploration.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND, IN COUNCIL ASSEMBLED, THAT THE TOWN IS OPPOSED TO SEISMIC TESTING AND OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT OFF THE SOUTH CAROLINA COAST.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA, ON THE 17TH DAY OF MARCH, 2015.


Patrick M. O'Neil, Mayor

Attest:


Ellen Miller, Town Clerk

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March 25, 2015

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

In reference: Mid-Atlantic Ocean Exploration and Development of Offshore Oil and Gas Industry

Dear Governor Haley:


The United States Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is currently receiving public comment on the matter of mid-Atlantic ocean exploration and development of offshore oil and gas industry. The Town of Sullivan's Island recently joined other littoral municipalities in passing a Resolution in opposition to seismic testing, exploration and drilling for oil and gas off of the Coast of South Carolina. A copy is enclosed for your review and guidance.

Exploration and drilling off of our coast will directly threaten the pristine beaches and invaluable marshland enjoyed by those living in and visiting our state. Whether considering offshore rigs, on-shore pipelines, the sprawling industrial support infrastructure or the risk of an oil spill, the threat to those using the coast is too significant a cost to bear. Furthermore, state fisheries produce over a billion dollars a year and the seismic testing needed to determine whether oil deposits exist threatens marine life.

We encourage you to support our position and take a stand against ocean exploration and development of offshore oil and gas industry.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,
TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND


Patrick M. O'Neil
Mayor

Enclosure