

September 20, 2015

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

Dear Governor Haley,

*Governor Haley, you have the power to protect and preserve South Carolina's coast.* Consequently, I would ask that you please help keep South Carolina pristine and sludge-free by *removing* South Carolina from the Mid- and South-Atlantic Oil and Gas Drilling 5-Year Program.

The importance of our nation's energy independence and the money that offshore oil and gas might bring to the State in terms of investment, jobs and potential revenues are the most frequently mentioned "positives" to support SC's inclusion in the Program.

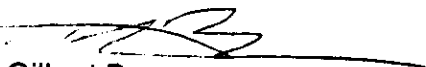
Unfortunately, in this case, the facts just don't bare this out. First, current estimates for reserves off the coast of SC are pegged at a 6-day supply of oil and gas at current consumption rates. This is a truly a "drop in the bucket" in the context of the US goal to wean itself off its dependence on foreign energy. Second, revenues from tourism, marine fisheries and outdoor recreational activities are conservatively worth more \$10 billion annually to the State. Why jeopardize these proven sources of income just to explore whether another, more limited source of revenue is possible, particularly at the cost of industrializing the SC coast, one of the most beautiful and fragile natural habitats in the world.

This is particularly unsettling given that the seismic test results are not to be released to the Program stakeholders nor to the public. Without the necessary transparency regarding the data, how can South Carolina make an informed decision regarding the real costs and potential benefits of the project.

Simply put, seismic testing, subsequent drilling and the attendant industrialization of our coastline is ***NOT WORTH THE RISK! IF YOU DRILL YOU SPILL!!***

By acting quickly and decisively, you can take a critical leadership position by pursuing the right course of action for the State today and ensuring a legacy for future generations.

Thank you for taking action and taking action now,



Gilbert Benz  
Isle of Palms, SC