

Wilmington, Delaware
July 1, 2019

#4685

Sponsor:

**Council
President
Shabazz**

Co-Sponsors:

**Council
Members
Oliver
Turner**

WHEREAS, the Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has initiated the process to develop a National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2019-2024. This plan could include expanding offshore oil drilling in the Arctic and in the Atlantic, including areas off the coast of Delaware; and

WHEREAS, the Department of the Interior has also endorsed seismic airgun blasting as a technique to find oil and gas deposits under the ocean floor; and

WHEREAS, seismic airguns shoot blasts of compressed air into the seafloor, creating noise that can be heard up to 2,500 miles from the source and negatively impacting the marine life that rely on sound for communication and survival; and

WHEREAS, offshore oil drilling activities also pose a significant risk of explosions or spillage, as witnessed by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in 2010, that could threaten Delaware’s economy and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, potential oil spills, leaks, drilling fluids and disrupted marine life could negatively impact Delaware’s beaches, bays, shorelines and water quality. This could deter visitors from Delaware and severely impact our coastal economy; and

WHEREAS, coastal tourism and industry accounts for 59,000 jobs and approximately \$7 billion in economic production in Delaware; and

WHEREAS, the potential implications of seismic airgun blasting and offshore oil drilling may impact the City of Wilmington. The Port of Wilmington has been ranked as the top North American port for imports of fresh fruit and fruit juice, and handles approximately 400 ship-calls annually with an annual import and export of more than 6.8 million tons. The

exploration and development of oil and gas off the mid and South Atlantic coast may negatively impact the services provided by the Port of Wilmington; and

WHEREAS, expanding fossil fuel production is counter-productive to reducing carbon emissions and addressing the long-term energy needs of our country; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wilmington endeavors to be a good steward of the state's environment and resources; and

WHEREAS, in order to combat climate change and our energy needs we need to focus on pursuing non-polluting sources of renewable energy that pose less risk to our coastal environments and economic wellbeing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON, that the Council opposes offshore oil drilling and seismic airgun blasting in the mid-Atlantic Ocean, and encourages the Department of the Interior to pursue renewable sources of energy to meet our energy needs.

Passed by City Council,

Attest: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution opposes the proposed plan to develop a National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Offshore oil drilling and seismic airgun blasting pose significant risks to our environment and economic wellbeing. This Resolution encourages the Department of the Interior to pursue renewable sources of energy to meet our energy needs and to limit our impact on climate change.