

OFFSHORE DRILLING BILL IS DIRTY ENERGY INDUSTRY DREAM

House Natural Resources Committee Takes Up Measure That Puts Oceans, Coastlines at Risk

WASHINGTON, DC. // October 11, 2017 // The House Natural Resources Committee is holding a hearing for a bill on offshore drilling today that poses danger to U.S. coastal economies, oceans and wildlife.

The draft—the opening salvo in a massive assault on public lands and waters—is extreme by any measure. It is an oil industry wish list that would:

- strip presidential authority to permanently protect sensitive ocean areas from drilling;
- strip presidential authority to establish marine monuments;
- let the Interior Secretary ignore the 5-year leasing public process and sell-off public waters without input or review;
- rescind worker and public safety standards that prevent spills in Arctic drilling; and,
- motivate states to support risky drilling by diverting taxpayer dollars to state coffers;

A coalition of environmental and conservation groups issued the following statement:

“After a disastrous oil spill in 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico, you’d think the House would endorse less drilling and more safety. No. This bill calls for *more drilling and less safety*.

This extreme measure is a giveaway to dirty energy companies. The American people own these lands and waters. The majority do not want our coastlines drilled. This bill offers them nothing—but danger to coastal economies and wildlife.”

150 groups, including a host of local businesses sent this [letter](#) opposing the bill.

The joint statement is signed by: Alaska Wilderness League, American Littoral Society, The Center for Biological Diversity, Clean Ocean Action, Earthjustice, Environment America, Inland Ocean Coalition, Natural Resources Defense Council, Oceana, The Sierra Club, Surfrider Foundation, The Wilderness Society.

Opposition to expanded offshore drilling is overwhelming and bipartisan. Republican governors of South Carolina, Maryland, and New Jersey have joined

Democratic governors of North Carolina, California, Virginia, and Delaware to publicly oppose the Trump administration's efforts to expand offshore drilling and seismic testing. Constituents from Florida to Maine and California to Alaska [have submitted hundreds of thousands of comments](#) opposing expansion efforts.

Americans have rejected the Trump administration's move to expand dirty and dangerous offshore drilling and energy exploration. That opposition includes [tens of thousands of local businesses and hundreds of thousands of commercial fishing families](#) that depend on clean coasts, [the majority of Americans, over 130 coastal municipalities](#), many Alaska Natives, bi-partisan lawmakers at the [local](#), [state](#) and [federal](#) levels, and a [host of faith and conservation leaders](#).

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The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) is an international nonprofit environmental organization with more than 3 million members and online activists. Since 1970, our lawyers, scientists, and other environmental specialists have worked to protect the world's natural resources, public health, and the environment. NRDC has offices in New York City; Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles; San Francisco; Chicago; Bozeman, Montana; and Beijing. Visit us at www.nrdc.org and follow us on Twitter [@NRDC](#).

Earthjustice is the premier nonprofit environmental law organization. We wield the power of law and the strength of partnership to protect people's health, to preserve magnificent places and wildlife, to advance clean energy, and to combat climate change. We are here because the earth needs a good lawyer.

Alaska Wilderness League was founded in 1993 as a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation to further the protection of amazing public lands and waters in Alaska. The League is the only Washington, DC-based environmental group devoted full-time to protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other wilderness-quality lands in Alaska. For more information, visit: <http://www.alaskawild.org>.

Oceana is the largest international advocacy organization dedicated solely to ocean conservation. Oceana is rebuilding abundant and biodiverse oceans by winning science-based policies in countries that control one third of the world's wild fish catch. With over 100 victories that stop overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution and killing of threatened species like turtles and sharks, Oceana's campaigns are delivering results. A restored ocean means that one billion people can enjoy a healthy seafood meal, every day, forever. Together, we can save the oceans and help feed the world. To learn more about Oceana's work in the United States, please visit usa.oceana.org.

The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3 million members and supporters nationwide. In addition to creating opportunities for people of all ages, levels and locations to have meaningful outdoor experiences, the Sierra Club works to safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and litigation. For more information, visit <http://www.sierraclub.org>.

Surfrider Foundation is a non-profit grassroots organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our world's oceans, waves and beaches through a powerful network. Founded in 1984 by a handful of visionary surfers in Malibu, California, the Surfrider Foundation now maintains over 500,000 supporters, activists and members, with more than 80 volunteer-led chapters and 60 clubs in the U.S., and more than 400 victories protecting our coasts. Learn more at surfrider.org.

Environment America has professional staff in 29 states and the Capitol which combine independent research, practical ideas and tough-minded advocacy to overcome the opposition of powerful special interests and win real results for the environment. Environment America draws on 30 years of success in tackling environmental problems. For more information, visit <http://www.environmentamerica.org>.

The Center for Biological Diversity is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 1.3 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places. The Center works to

secure a future for all species, great and small, through science, law and creative media, with a focus on protecting the lands, waters and climate that species need to survive. For more information, please visit: <http://biologicaldiversity.org/>.

The Wilderness Society is the leading conservation organization working to protect wilderness and inspire Americans to care for our wild places. Founded in 1935, and now with more than one million members and supporters, The Wilderness Society has led the effort to permanently protect 109 million acres of wilderness and to ensure sound management of our shared national lands. www.wilderness.org.

Clean Ocean Action is a broad-based coalition of over 117 organizations dedicated to improve and protect the marine waters of New York and New Jersey. Since 1984, COA has successfully used research, education, and citizen action to convince elected officials to enact or enforce strong laws to stop ocean industrialization and pollution.

Inland Ocean Coalition is an inland movement that builds land-to-sea stewardship. With seven Inland Ocean Coalition chapters, we work with communities to take an active role in improving the impacts and relationships between the inland, the coasts, and the ocean. Key areas include: supporting key legislative efforts, igniting community engagement, facilitating learning partnerships, creating cultural shifts through education, empowering youth through inclusion, and strengthening local capacity to implement watershed approaches.

The American Littoral Society is a member-supported, coastal conservation non-profit that promotes the study and conservation of marine life and habitat, protects the coast from harm and engages communities to do the same through work in education, advocacy, and conservation. Founded in 1961, the American Littoral Society has regional offices in New Jersey, New York, Boston, and Florida. For more information, visit www.LittoralSociety.org.