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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

May 9, 2019

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Harris:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara in support of legislation to prohibit any new oil and gas lease sales on the Pacific Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

Thank you for cosponsoring S. 1318 and S. 1304. The Board of Supervisors voted in 2018 to specifically oppose the new leasing off the coast of California proposed in the Draft Proposed Five-Year Outer Continental Shelf Leasing Program for 2019 through 2024. The Draft Proposed Plan would make 90 percent of the Offshore Continental Shelf open to oil and gas exploration.

In Santa Barbara County, both the 1969 oil spill and the 2015 oil pipeline rupture off the Gaviota Coast demonstrated the catastrophic damage that oil extraction can inflict. The California public and lawmakers have long recognized the value of protecting the State's coastal economy and protecting local fisheries and coastlines from the threats posed by offshore oil and gas exploration. S. 1318 and S. 1304 would ensure protection for Santa Barbara's coastal areas and bio-diversity and protecting the valuable coastal environment has been a local priority since the devastating oil spill of 1969. The 1,100-mile coastline of California is a national treasure that is the heart of a tourist industry that generates nearly $5 billion in State and local taxes annually.

Please continue to work with your colleagues on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee to expedite consideration of legislation to permanently ban future offshore oil and gas leasing along the California coast.

Sincerely yours,

Don Gilchrest
Washington Representative

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