

Agenda Item 2B:

Federal Advocacy Letters

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

July 29, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara to urge you to ensure that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) excludes any offshore oil and gas leases sales in the Northern, Central, and Southern California Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Planning Areas as it drafts the Proposed 2017-2022 OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

Serious accidents and environmental damage can and do occur at offshore drilling sites, and protecting the valuable coastal environment has been a priority in Santa Barbara County 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. Additional offshore oil leasing and production would threaten the quality of the County's air and water and threaten public health, while adversely impacting its marine resources.

The County of Santa Barbara strongly supports the development of clean, renewable sources of energy, and the reduction of greenhouse gases that impact both public health and the environment, with the associated economic costs. Energy companies are not producing oil and/or gas on the vast majority of tracts that they already hold in offshore leases, and it makes more sense to ensure that they are developing existing leases rather than offering new ones. Please continue the longstanding protection of the valuable and irreplaceable California coastline, and ensure that its waters are not included in the new draft five-year plan.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas P. Walters
Washington Representative

TPW:jaw