

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2006

The Honorable Charles Taylor  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior and Environment  
Committee on Appropriations  
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Norm Dicks  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior and Environment  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Taylor and Ranking Member Dicks:


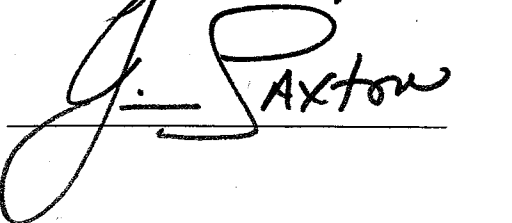
We are writing to express our strong support for the longstanding bipartisan legislative moratorium on new mineral leasing activity on submerged lands of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). We are deeply appreciative of the leadership your Subcommittee has shown on this issue over the years and hope to work with you this year to continue this vital protection.

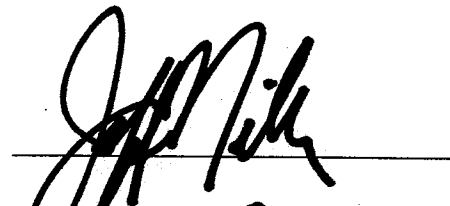

The legislative moratorium language prohibits the use of federal funds for offshore leasing, pre-leasing and other oil and gas drilling-related activities in moratoria areas, enhancing protection of these areas from offshore oil and gas development. As you know, in 1990 President George H. W. Bush signed an executive memorandum placing a ten-year moratorium on new leasing on the OCS. In 1998, this moratorium was renewed by President Bill Clinton and extended until 2012. As you know, President George W. Bush endorsed the moratorium in his 2007 budget. These actions have all been met with public acclaim and as necessary steps to preserve the economic and environmental value of our nation's coasts.

With a renewed interest in developing natural gas and oil on the OCS, we believe it is again imperative for Congress to reaffirm its authority on this issue. Therefore, we respectfully urge you to include the OCS moratorium language in the fiscal year 2007 Interior and Environment Appropriations legislation. Specifically, we ask you to use the language in Sections 104, 105 and 106, Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-54). These sections restrict oil and gas activities within the OCS in the Georges Bank-North Atlantic planning area, Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic planning area, Eastern Gulf of Mexico planning area; Northern, Southern and Central California planning areas, and Washington and Oregon planning area.

Once again, we encourage the Subcommittee to support these important provisions, which represent over 20 years of bipartisan agreement on the importance of protecting the economically and environmentally valuable coastal areas of the United States. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

  
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**Letter to the Subcommittee on Interior and  
Environment  
Re: OCS Moratorium  
April 6, 2006**

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