**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE OPPOSITION OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OFFSHORE DRILLING ACTIVITIES ALONG SOUTH CAROLINA’S PRECIOUS COAST.

Whereas, the United States Department of the Interior lifted a ban that would allow for new offshore oil and gas drilling in nearly all of the coastal waters of the United States in an attempt to bolster domestic energy production; and

Whereas, the members of the House of Representatives strongly oppose offshore drilling and seismic testing in the coastal waters of South Carolina; and

Whereas, the members of the House support the decision of Governor Henry McMaster to seek a waiver from the department’s decision. This move comes after Florida was removed from consideration for offshore drilling activities, a move tantamount to the federal government picking winners and losers in the oil and gas marketplace; and

Whereas, the members of the House also support the decision of Governor McMaster and Attorney General Alan Wilson to join the lawsuit filed by sixteen South Carolina cities and towns to stop the issuance of permits for the use of seismic air guns; and

Whereas, exploratory and commercial drilling, extraction, and transportation of offshore oil and gas resources pose a risk of spill and the construction of onshore infrastructure, such as pipelines or refineries, which would compromise the character of our coast; and

Whereas, the department’s decision places pressure on coastal states to develop the infrastructure required to transport oil and gas and ignores whether it is practical and affordable for the State to undertake this development; and

Whereas, opening up the coastal waters of South Carolina through federal action usurps the state’s right to choose how it spends it resources and forces the tax dollars of all South Carolinians to cover the infrastructure costs for the benefit of energy companies; and

Whereas, the seismic surveys required to find oil deposits may impact the migration, feeding, and other behavioral patterns of millions of marine mammals, including the Northern Right Whale, South Carolina’s state migratory mammal; and

Whereas, the full impacts of seismic testing and offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean are not yet fully understood by scientists or the federal government and it is a gamble that the people of South Carolina are unwilling to undertake; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are concerned about the potential environmental and economic impacts of offshore drilling activities on the quality of precious natural coastal resources and the tourism industry. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, express their opposition to offshore drilling activities along South Carolina’s precious coast.

Be it further resolved that copy of this resolution be presented to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and the South Carolina Congressional delegation.

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