

Letter to Secs. Zinke and Ross: Oppose Seismic Airgun Blasting in the Atlantic

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in expressing strong bipartisan Congressional opposition to offshore drilling and exploration, including seismic airgun blasting off the Atlantic Coast. As you may have heard, NOAA just issued Incidental Harassment Authorizations (IHAs) for offshore exploration permits in the region, which now go to DOI for final approval of the seismic permits.

As you know, last year, President Trump signed his executive order, “Implementing an America-First Offshore Energy Strategy,” that instructs the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to reevaluate opening the Outer Continental Shelf Planning Areas to oil and gas exploration and drilling, including the Atlantic Ocean and Eastern Gulf of Mexico. This week, the administration took a major step in following through with the exploration instruction – the issuance of five IHAs for Atlantic seismic airgun blasting permit applications.

As Members who represent districts along the Atlantic Coast, we know first-hand how such an action threatens the vibrant Atlantic Coast economies dependent on healthy ocean ecosystems for fishing, tourism, recreation and numerous businesses reliant on these industries.

While Secretary Zinke has offered the entire Atlantic Ocean and Eastern Gulf of Mexico for potential future lease sales, and thereby exposing our fragile coastal communities to risk down the road, seismic testing puts our communities at risk now.

We have heard from countless business owners, elected officials, and residents along our coasts who recognize and reject the risks of offshore drilling and exploration, including seismic airgun blasting. Nearly all East Coast Governors; the North, South and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils; an alliance representing over 43,000 businesses and 500,000 commercial fishing families from Florida to Maine; and more than 220 East Coast municipalities have passed formal resolutions opposing offshore drilling and exploration, including seismic airgun blasting in the Atlantic or Eastern Gulf, and it is very likely your local communities are included. You can easily check to see [here](#).

The deadline for signing on is TUESDAY, DEC. 4. Please contact Rep. John Rutherford’s office or Rep. Don Beyer’s office with questions or to sign on. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Rutherford
Member of Congress

Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress

Don Beyer
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone
Member of Congress

