

January 23, 2025

Ms. Kelly Hammerle
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (VAM-LD)
U.S. Department of Interior
45600 Woodland Road,
Sterling, VA 20166-9216

RE: Opposition to New Lease Sales in the Draft Proposed National OCS Oil & Gas Leasing Program from 144 Non-profit organizations (Docket No. BOEM-2025-0483)

Dear Secretary Burgum,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, the 144 undersigned organizations, groups, and institutions write in strong opposition to the administration's proposal to dramatically expand offshore oil and gas drilling in our nation's public waters by offering 1.27 billion acres to the oil and gas industry.

This draft offshore leasing proposal would open up highly-sensitive waters off Alaska, attempt to resurrect drilling off California, and offer up waters off Florida's coast that have been protected for decades — on top of adding even more leasing in the Gulf off the coasts of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Tens of millions of people depend on resilient coastlines, thriving marine wildlife, healthy fisheries, and clean beaches to protect them and keep their economies running. This draft plan risks sacrificing it all just to benefit a handful of oil executives, whose companies are already producing all-time-record amounts of oil and gas. Instead of embracing a clean energy future, this administration is doubling down on fossil fuels, locking us into decades of harmful, future greenhouse gas emissions that will deliver even worse extreme climate events.

As we have seen too many times before, catastrophic oil spills—like the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010, the Exxon Valdez spill in 1989, the Santa Barbara spill in 1969, and the more recent Huntington Beach spills in 2021 and 2024—cause ecological collapse, devastate local businesses, threaten public health and safety, and damage regional economies for decades. Expanding offshore drilling into new waters significantly increases the risk of another spill, which is especially dangerous given the administration's drastic cuts to federal agency funding and capacity for spill response efforts. If an oil spill occurs where there is no response infrastructure in place, cleanup could prove to be impossible.

But oil spill disasters are only one way in which offshore drilling wreaks havoc. Day-to-day oil and gas operations degrade marine ecosystems, imperil wildlife with deafening seismic blasting, destroy vital habitats, and lead to thousands of unplugged and abandoned wells. These impacts threaten not only endangered whales like the Cook Inlet beluga in Alaska and Rice's whale in the Gulf, and important wildlife habitat like the world-class foraging grounds for whales off Southern California, but also the fisheries, recreation, and tourism economies that rely on healthy ocean ecosystems. Drilling also

releases toxic air pollution that harms the health of people whose homes, schools, grocery stores, and places of worship have been forced into close proximity with the associated industrial infrastructure.

The U.S. is already the world's top producer of oil and gas—and top producer in human history. Meanwhile, just this summer, Congress mandated an unprecedented 36 offshore oil and gas lease sales over the next 15 years. Adding more leasing will not lower prices at the pump for families, nor will it deliver energy as quickly or as cheaply as the clean energy projects this administration has blocked. It will only expose communities to even greater risk while offering yet another windfall of profit to fossil fuel company executives.

The vast majority of Americans want to protect our public waters from offshore drilling. They understand that our ocean is fundamental to the future of our environment, our economy, our food security, and our health and safety—not just a profit-making tool for the fossil fuel industry.

The administration's draft proposal presents a false choice between "energy security" and a livable climate and healthy ocean, when in reality it helps neither. What it does deliver is more risk and more pollution — and a guarantee that people and wildlife will be forced to deal with the consequences of both. We urge you to reject this reckless expansion of offshore drilling and protect the coasts that millions of Americans depend on.

Sincerely,

Alaska Wilderness League
American Friends Service Committee
Animal Defenders International
Animal Welfare Institute (AWI)
Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc
Anthropocene: The Sixth Extinction
Atlantic Avenue Association
Azul
Bayou City Waterkeeper
Between the Waters
BlueGreen Generation
Bold Alliance
Bow Seat: Creative Action for Conservation
Business Alliance for Protecting the Pacific Coast (BAPPC)
California Coastkeeper Alliance
California Environmental Voters
Carolina Ocean Alliance
Center for Biological Diversity
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
Clean Energy Action

Clean Ocean Action
Clean Water Action
CleanEarth4Kids.org
CLEO Institute
Climate First: Replacing Oil & Gas (CFROG)
Climate Hawks Vote
Climate Health Now
Climate Justice Alliance
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life
Coalition to Protect America's National Parks
Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin
Coastal Corridor Alliance
Colorado Dem Party - Energy & Environment Initiative
Conservation Law Foundation
Cook Inletkeeper
CPAWS Yukon
Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action
Defend Our Health
Defenders of Wildlife
Dream Tank
Earth Ethics, Inc.
EarthEcho International
Earthjustice
Elders Climate Action
Empower Our Future
Endangered Species Coalition
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin
Environmental Defense Center
Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition
Fish On
Food & Water Watch
FOUR PAWS USA
FracTracker Alliance
Friends of the Earth
Futureswell
Golden Gate Bird Alliance
GreenFaith
GreenLatinos
Greenpeace USA
Healthy Gulf
Healthy Ocean Coalition

Hispanic Access Foundation
Howling For Wolves
Humboldt Waterkeeper
Indivisible HoCoMD
Inland Ocean Coalition
International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute
Intheshadowofthewolf
John Muir Project
Keep Massachusetts Beautiful
Kettle Range Conservation Group
Latino Outdoors
League of Conservation Voters
Lee (MA) Greener Gateway Committee
Long Beach Alliance for Clean Energy
Lynnhaven River NOW (LRNow)
Marine Education, Research & Rehabilitation Institute, Inc.
Marine Mammal Alliance Nantucket (MMAN)
Mount Diablo Bird Alliance
National Aquarium
National Ocean Protection Coalition
Native Movement
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
Nature For All Coalition
New Jersey Environmental Lobby
New Jersey League of Conservation Voters
New Jersey Sustainable Business Network
New Yorkers for Clean Power
Next 100 Coalition
Northern Alaska Environmental Center
Ocean Conservancy
Ocean Conservation Research
Ocean Defense Initiative
Oceana
Oceanic Global
Oil and Gas Action Network
Oil Change International
OneUpAction Programs
Orange County Coastkeeper
Patagonia
People's Justice Council
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Plastic Pollution Coalition

Progress Florida
Public Lands Conservancy
Putnam Progressives
Puvunga Wetlands Protectors
Resource Renewal Institute
Salted Roots
San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility
Save Coastal Wildlife
Save Mount Diablo
Save Our Shores
Sea Turtle Conservancy
Seaside Sustainability
Shedd Aquarium
Sheffield Saves
Sierra Club
SoCal 350 Climate Action
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy
Sovereign Iñupiat for a Living Arctic (SILA)
Stand.earth
Sunflower Alliance
Surfrider Foundation
Sustainable Ocean Alliance
The Climate Center
The Enviro Show
The Last Plastic Straw
The Marine Mammal Center
The Ocean Project
The Rachel Carson Council
Tomales Bay Foundation
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Waterkeeper Alliance
Waterkeepers Chesapeake
Wayland Bridle Trail Trustees, Inc.
WILDCOAST
Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WE CAN)
Yukon River Camp
350 Bay Area Action
350 Conejo / San Fernando Valley
350 Mass
350 Pensacola