



THE  
**JERSEY SHORE PARTNERSHIP**  
*The Sand on the Beach People*

February 26, 2016

Dear Congressman:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Jersey Shore Partnership to express opposition to the United States Department of the Interior's new offshore energy plan under consideration. This plan would open up part of the Atlantic basin to leasing starting in 2021.

In recent years, Congress has proposed legislation that would allow the states to each decide whether to allow drilling for oil off their coasts. The people of New Jersey have clearly spoken on this subject, stating that not one oil rig be erected off the picturesque shores of New Jersey.

Over 1,200 miles to our south, Louisiana is familiar with the consequences of offshore oil drilling. In April 2010, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill devastated the Louisiana barrier islands and its gulf coast neighbors. Over 210 million gallons of crude oil flowed into the Gulf of Mexico that summer. The state would go on to lose \$23 billion dollars in tourism revenue over the next three years.

This is not the future we envision for New Jersey. A BP-type oil spill off the coast of Virginia is an unacceptable risk that threatens our tourism economy, fishing industry, business opportunities, job creation, and quality of life. And, as important, an oil spill in the Atlantic would be a devastating environmental setback for the coastal waters and aqua culture all along the Atlantic seaboard. In contrast, off shore drilling offers no benefits to the State of New Jersey.

As representatives of New Jersey's advocacy organization dedicated to preserving and protecting our coastline, we call on you to extend the ban on offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean.

Sincerely,

*Margot Walsh*

Executive Director  
Jersey Shore Partnership

*On behalf of the Jersey Shore Partnership Board of Directors*

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*The Jersey Shore Partnership is a not-for-profit, non-partisan organization that advocates for stable funding on the state and federal levels for coastal protection and beach replenishment and on related issues and initiatives that are important to the State's coastal communities, the tourism economy and our quality of life.*