

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 11, 2018

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary
United States Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

We write to you today regarding your recent decision to remove Florida from inclusion in the Trump Administration's new proposal to open up the vast majority of the outer continental shelf to oil and gas drilling. We request that our states also be immediately exempted from any new oil or gas leases as a part of this plan.

In the statement on your decision to remove Florida, you indicated that President Trump had directed you to reestablish our country's offshore oil and gas leasing program in a way that "takes into consideration the local and state voice." In addition to Florida, the states of Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, New Hampshire, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Connecticut, California, Oregon, and Washington have all opposed this plan for new leases off their coasts. Coastal cities and towns across the country have also passed resolutions in opposition while local residents, businesses, scientists, the military, and others have publicly raised serious concerns.

Just like Florida, our states are unique with vibrant coastal economies. Providing all of our states with the same exemption from dangerous offshore oil and gas drilling would ensure that vital industries from tourism to recreation to fishing are not needlessly placed in harm's way.


We urge you to honor the commitment of this Administration by listening to the local and state voices that we represent and to respect their overwhelming opposition to oil and gas drilling off our coasts. Instead of focusing on short term benefits for oil and gas companies, our country should be looking toward a clean energy future. We hope we work can work with you to protect our natural resources, our environment, and the livelihoods of coastal residents so that they remain for future generations.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

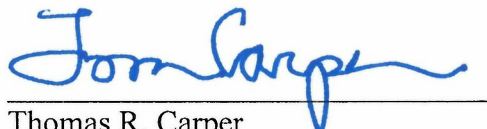
Sincerely,



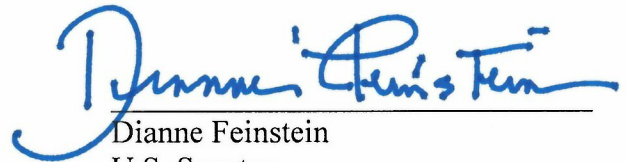
Jack Reed
U.S. Senator



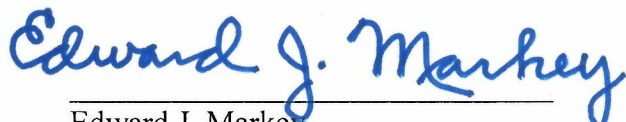
Charles E. Schumer
U.S. Senator



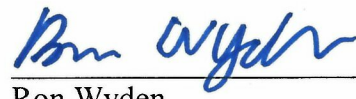
Thomas R. Carper
U.S. Senator




Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator



Edward J. Markey
U.S. Senator




Ron Wyden
U.S. Senator




Sheldon Whitehouse
U.S. Senator




Kamala D. Harris
U.S. Senator




Patty Murray
U.S. Senator



Richard Blumenthal
U.S. Senator



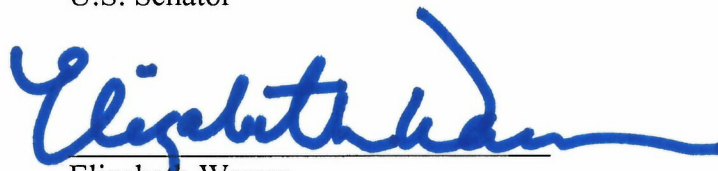
Benjamin L. Cardin
U.S. Senator



Chris Van Hollen
U.S. Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
U.S. Senator



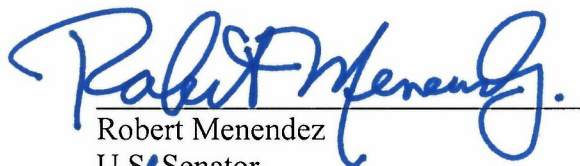
Elizabeth Warren
U.S. Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
U.S. Senator



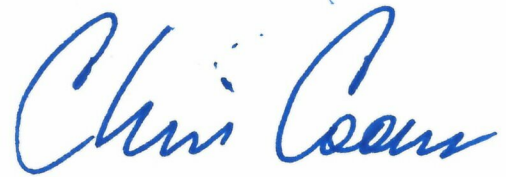
Cory A. Booker
U.S. Senator



Robert Menendez
U.S. Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
U.S. Senator



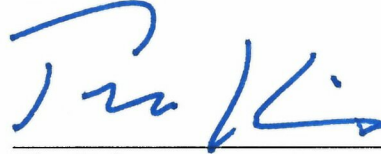
Christopher A. Coons
U.S. Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
U.S. Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Senator



Tim Kaine
U.S. Senator