



STATE OF DELAWARE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

JOHN CARNEY
GOVERNOR

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January 11, 2018

Secretary Ryan Zinke
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke,

I am writing to express my strong concern and objection to your proposal to include areas in the Atlantic as part of a dramatic expansion of oil and natural gas drilling nationwide. We urge you to maintain the longstanding protections in place for Delaware and coastal areas throughout the Atlantic region, and reverse this decision before the 2019-2024 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program is finalized.

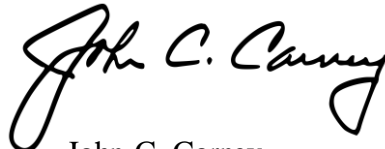
Opening areas on the Outer Continental Shelf off the Atlantic coast threatens the economic and environmental well-being of Delaware and states throughout the entire region. This extreme decision poses severe risks to vital environmental areas in our states, as well as the fishing, tourism, and recreational industries that depend on them.

More than 7 million people visit Delaware's coastal communities every year. They spend time on our world-class beaches, eat at restaurants, shop at local businesses, and help support thousands of families that work in our local economy. Delaware's coastal economy generates almost \$7 billion in economic production to the state, and supports over 60,000 jobs in the fishing, tourism, and recreation sectors. According to a 2012 analysis performed by the Delaware Sea Grant, more than 10 percent of Delaware's total employment, taxes and production value can be attributed to coastal related activities.

This economic activity is driven by the beautiful beaches, inland bays, wetland areas, and other natural resources that our state is blessed to have. We must protect these resources for future generations. An expansion of oil and gas drilling off the coast of Delaware and in other areas in the Atlantic directly threatens these resources, as well as overall ocean health and the mammals, fish, sea turtles and other species that depend on a healthy environment.

The health of Delaware's economy and environment are directly tied to the health of the state's coastal areas. I cannot accept the tremendous risks associated with opening vast areas in the Atlantic to drilling. I request a meeting with you and your leadership team, as was granted to Florida, to discuss the proposal in more detail. Thank you for your attention to this request and I look forward to your response. I can be reached through my Policy Director, Albert Shields, at Albert.Shields@state.de.us or (302) 577-3210.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John C. Carney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

John C. Carney
Governor