



State of South Carolina)
County of Horry)
Town of Surfside Beach)

Resolution #15-159

To Oppose Seismic Testing & Offshore Drilling Activities

WHEREAS, this matter comes before the Council of the Town of Surfside Beach at a regularly scheduled meeting held the 22nd day of September 2015; and

WHEREAS, the US Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is currently in the process of trying to open the mid- and south-Atlantic planning areas to exploration and development of offshore oil and gas including risky methods, such as seismic blasting; and

WHEREAS, seismic air-guns fire intense blasts of compressed air, one of the loudest manmade sounds in the ocean. These dynamite-like blasts can occur as frequently as every ten seconds for days to weeks at a time, and are loud enough to harm marine and aquatic life; and

WHEREAS, the full impacts of seismic testing and offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean are not yet fully understood by scientists, the oil and gas industry, BOEM or the Federal Government, and lower-impact alternative technologies may be available for exploration in the near future; and

WHEREAS, exploratory and commercial drilling, extraction, and transportation of offshore oil and gas resources pose a significant risk of a spill; and

WHEREAS, eventual offshore drilling may require significant onshore infrastructure, such as pipelines or refineries, which may harm the character of our coast; and

WHEREAS, offshore drilling activities pose threats for the coastal wetland areas of the Town of Surfside Beach, which are of intrinsic ecological value for numerous migratory bird species, serve as essential nursery habitats for recreational and commercially important fisheries, and act as natural buffers from storm surge and hurricanes; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Surfside Beach is a South Carolina municipality wherein a major economic force is tourism related to the appreciation of our natural coastal and historical environment, which are also the primary factors contributing to the high quality of life the Town's residents enjoy, enabling successful businesses, recruitment and attracting new residents; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Surfside Beach endeavors to be a good steward of its coastal environment and its resources; and

WHEREAS, the Surfside Beach Town Council believes that more research should be done to fully understand and to better address the impacts of seismic testing, and the options for mitigating those impacts before exploration begins, including incorporation of the National Marine Fisheries Service's soon-to-be-released acoustic guidance document; and,

WHEREAS, the exploration and development of oil and natural gas in the mid- and south-Atlantic planning areas will not effectively or fully address the long-term energy needs of our country; and

WHEREAS, the Town believes that it would be more economically and ecologically responsible to pursue non-polluting sources of renewable energy through solar, wind, and biomass energy production projects that pose less risk to its coastal environment and economic health before using uncertain methods of seismic blasting for offshore oil and gas exploration.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Surfside Beach Town Council does hereby submit its opposition to seismic testing and offshore oil and gas development off the coast of South Carolina.

BE IT SO RESOLVED, this 22nd day of September 2015.

Douglas F. Samples, Mayor

David L. Pellegrino, Mayor Pro Tempore

Robert F. Childs, Town Council

Mark L. Johnson, Town Council

Mary M. Mabry, Town Council

Ralph J. Magliette, Town Council

Randle M. Stevens, Town Council

Attest:

Debra E. Herrmann, CMC, Town Clerk