

Resolution No.: 18-406  
Introduced: March 1, 2016  
Adopted: March 1, 2016

**COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Hucker  
Co-Sponsors: Councilmembers Rice, Elrich, Berliner, Leventhal and Riemer

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**SUBJECT:** Opposition to Oil and Gas Development in the Atlantic Ocean

**Background**

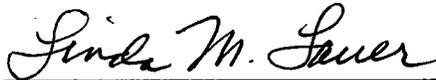
1. The U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is considering opening the Mid - and South Atlantic Ocean to exploration and development of offshore oil and gas including risky methods, such as seismic blasting to search for potential deposits below the ocean floor. Seismic air-guns fire frequent, intense blasts of compressed air, which create one of the loudest manmade sounds in the ocean at 250 decibels. These intense sounds may injure or kill marine and aquatic life. The full impact of seismic blasting and offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean is not yet fully understood by scientists, the oil and gas industry, BOEM, or the Federal Government.
2. Exploratory and commercial drilling, extraction, and transportation of offshore oil and gas resources pose a significant risk of an oil spill and leakage of other toxic waste. Offshore drilling may require significant onshore infrastructure, such as pipelines or refineries, which may harm the character of our Delmarva coast.
3. Offshore drilling activities would threaten coastland wetlands in Maryland that have valuable economic value for many industries, serve as essential nursery habitats for recreational and commercially important fisheries, and act as natural buffers from storm surge and hurricanes.
4. Offshore exploration and drilling activities would threaten the Chesapeake Bay, a major historical, cultural, economic, and ecological treasure in the region.
5. The exploration and development of oil and gas off the Mid - and South Atlantic coast would not effectively supply the long-term energy needs of our country.
6. Montgomery County has long been a good steward of the State's environment and its natural resources. A healthy and vibrant coastal environment supports tourism and fishing for the benefit of current and future residents, businesses, property owners, and visitors to the County and State.

**Action**

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

1. The County Council opposes offshore oil and gas development in the Mid - and South Atlantic Ocean adjacent to the Delmarva Coast, in general, and especially the use of seismic blasting technology for this development.
2. The County Council supports expanded investments in clean, renewable energy. The County and State have already increased renewable energy capacity by more than 50% and hope to become a national hub for green businesses and jobs.
3. The County Council calls on the State of Maryland, the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States to oppose offshore oil and gas development in the Mid- and South Atlantic Ocean. The Council will work with the Governor, the Maryland House and Senate Delegations to the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress, and the Montgomery County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly to accomplish this.

This is a correct copy of Council action.



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Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council

