



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

P.O. Box 402

MAIL CODE 401-07

Trenton, NJ 08625-0402

TEL: # (609) 292-2885

FAX # (609) 292-7695

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

BOB MARTIN
Commissioner

August 16, 2017

Kelly Hammerle
National Program Manager
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)
45600 Woodland Road, Mailstop VAM-LD
Sterling, Virginia 20166

Re: Response to BOEM's Request for Information and Comments on Preparation of 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program MAA10400

Dear Ms. Hammerle:

On behalf of Governor Chris Christie, this letter is New Jersey's response to BOEM's July 3, 2017 Federal Register notice soliciting information and comments on the development of a new 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (National OCS Program).

The State of New Jersey strongly opposes any waters off our coastline being considered for inclusion in this leasing program. New Jersey has consistently and steadfastly opposed any industrialization of our coast, including the exploration and development of offshore oil and natural gas resources, nor into any portion of the Atlantic Ocean that could negatively impact New Jersey's precious natural resources or vibrant coastal communities. These waters are home to plant, fish, mammal and avian species, including federally listed endangered species. The risk of adverse impacts to our marine waters and the species that depend on them is unacceptable.

In addition to their environmental and cultural importance, Atlantic Ocean waters also provide significant economic value to our State. In 2016, New Jersey's tourism industry generated over \$44 billion, directly supported more than 321,000 jobs, and indirectly supported more than 517,000 jobs—a total of nearly 10% of our state's workforce. The revenue generated by this tourism produced \$4.9 billion in state and local taxes and \$5.6 billion in federal taxes. New Jersey's recreational and commercial fishing industries are also critical to our economic health. In 2015, New Jersey's seafood industry supported more than 31,000 jobs, and the state is home to one of the largest saltwater recreational fishing industries in the nation and some of the most important commercial fishing ports on the Atlantic coast. Given the role of New Jersey's coastal waters in our economy, the National OCS Program would put at risk not only our coastal economy, but a significant portion of our statewide economy.

Weighing the potential negative impacts to New Jersey's natural resources, coastal communities, and economy with the potential for energy generation and current energy needs, the State of New Jersey opposes any portion of the North and Mid-Atlantic Ocean being included in the development of a National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

Sincerely,



Bob Martin,
Commissioner