MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

'Save Our Waters': Prohibit Offshore Drilling Infrastructure in New York

A.10608—Englebright

(Governor Program #25)

No Same As

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, navigation law and transportation corporations law related to infrastructure and vessels associated with the production of oil or natural gas in federal waters.

BACKGROUND
Over the last 150+ years, the oil and gas industry in the U.S. has amassed an injurious track record of oil spills and other environmental disasters, which have had significant, lasting impacts on our environment. Catastrophic oil spills like the Exxon Valdez and Deep Water Horizon destroyed local fisheries, threatened human health, and left environmental damage that would take decades to recover from. Even without a large spill, fossil fuel exploration during normal conditions can have a lasting impact. Seismic blasts used in oil exploration have been shown to disrupt marine life, from whales to zooplankton, and can kill or severely injure fish and shellfish, including those of commercial importance like squid, lobster, and scallops.

JUSTIFICATION
NY’s 1,700 miles of coastline is threatened by the U.S. Department of Interior’s Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) recent proposal to open more than 90% of the Outer Continental Shelf for oil and gas exploration and production. BOEM’s proposal directly threatens Long Island’s waterways, wildlife, public health, and local economy. In addition, offshore oil and gas exploration runs counter to NY’s climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, including goals to achieve 50% renewables, 2400MW of offshore wind, and a 40% greenhouse gas reduction by 2030. Offshore drilling also has the potential to offset the billions of dollars the state is investing in upgrading water infrastructure, improving water quality, restoring fisheries, and protecting our coastlines. It is critical to protect New York’s waters and our coastal communities by prohibiting the opening of the Atlantic Region Outer Continental Shelf for leasing, exploration and development of oil and gas.

SUMMARY OF KEY PROVISIONS
- Prevent state leasing for the exploration, development, and production of gas and oil in the marine and coastal district.
- Prohibit any new lease that authorizes or enables the installation of infrastructure associated with exploration, development, or production of oil or natural gas in federal waters located in the North Atlantic Planning Area.
- Prohibit pipeline corporations from acquiring title of state lands.
- Prohibit petroleum-bearing vessels carrying crude from the North Atlantic Planning Area from entering or moving within navigable waters of the state or any tidewaters bordering on or lying within the boundaries of Nassau or Suffolk Counties.
- Prohibit the issuance or renewal of any license for any major facility from storing or transferring petroleum produced in the navigable waters of the state or any tidewaters bordering on and lying within the boundaries of Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS
A.10608—SAVE OUR WATERS FROM OFFSHORE DRILLING

CCE is an 80,000 member non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization that works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment

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