



Town of Brookhaven Long Island

Edward P. Romaine, Supervisor

January 25, 2018

Hon. Ryan Zinke, Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

Recently you announced the National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Plan that calls for drilling in the Atlantic Ocean, off the Alaskan Coast, and in the Pacific Ocean. Two of the potential sites are in the North Atlantic region, which encompasses Long Island.

Brookhaven Town has the largest coastline of any town on Long Island with three distinct coastal waters; ocean, bay, and sound. As Town Supervisor, I do not support drilling in waters off our coastline. Like most Americans, I am concerned about the huge risks offshore drilling carries. A spill anywhere on the Atlantic Coast could decimate large sections of the coastline and negatively impact our coastal economy. The Long Island coastline supports nearly 350,000 jobs and generates millions of dollars through tourism, fishing, and other industries.

I am deeply concerned not only with the damage to tourism but also the potential environmental harm to Fire Island, a deeply important natural island in the Town of Brookhaven, as well as the potential damage to our marine life and water quality here on Long Island.

This proposal came just as the 9-cent per oil barrel tax to fund emergency cleanup of oil spills expired. The tax, which was renewed in 2005 as part of the Energy Policy Act, expired and there is no congressional plan to extend this tax, rendering ocean drilling riskier than ever.

In addition, the Trump administration has announced plans to roll back regulatory protections for deep-water drilling. These regulations deal with safety checks and equipment standards on oil rigs. This will only increase the risk to our coastline from ocean drilling for oil and gas.

I urge you to exempt New York from off-shore drilling and further request that your Department take a deeper look into the potentials that presently exist in renewable energies like solar and wind as opposed to our current reliance on coal, oil, and natural gas.

Sincerely,

Edward P. Romaine
Supervisor

EPR/brs

cc: Charles Schumer, Senate Minority Leader
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Congressman Lee Zeldin

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