

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 15-0269R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Kraft, Henry, President Young, Councilmembers Clarke, Welch,
Reisinger, Middleton, Scott, Mosby Costello, Curran, Spector, Stokes, Branch
Introduced and adopted: October 19, 2015

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Opposing Oil and Gas Development Off Maryland's Shores

FOR the purpose of opposing offshore oil and gas development in the mid-Atlantic Ocean adjacent to the Maryland Coast in general, and expressing even greater concern about, and opposition to, the use of seismic blasting technology in the pursuit of such development.

Recitals

WHEREAS, the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is currently in the process of trying to open the mid and South Atlantic Ocean to exploration and development of offshore oil and gas through the use of risky methods, such as seismic blasting.

WHEREAS, seismic air-guns fire intense blasts of compressed air which create one of the loudest manmade sounds in the ocean at 200-230 decibels. These blasts can occur as frequently as every ten seconds, for days to weeks at a time. They are loud enough to harm marine and aquatic life.

WHEREAS, the impact of seismic testing and offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean is not yet fully understood by scientists, the oil and gas industry, BOEM, or the Federal Government.

WHEREAS, exploratory and commercial drilling, extraction, and transportation of offshore oil and gas resources continues to pose a significant risk of explosion or spill.

WHEREAS, offshore drilling may require the construction of significant onshore infrastructure, such as pipelines or refineries, which, in many instances, may harm the unmarred character of our coast.

WHEREAS, offshore drilling activities pose threats to coastal wetlands in Maryland, 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 surges and hurricanes.

WHEREAS, offshore drilling activities pose threats to the Chesapeake Bay, a major historical, cultural, economic, and ecological treasure in this region.

WHEREAS, the exploration and development of oil and gas off the mid and South Atlantic coast will not effectively address the long-term energy needs of our country.

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 **WHEREAS**, the City of Baltimore endeavors to be a good steward of the state’s environment
2 and its resources.

3 **WHEREAS**, tourism that is related to the appreciation of our natural coastal and historical
4 environment is a major economic force in Baltimore. This maritime heritage also contributes to
5 the high quality of life the City’s residents enjoy, enabling business recruitment and attracting
6 new residents.

7 **WHEREAS**, the City of Baltimore recommends that it would be more economically and
8 ecologically responsible to pursue non-polluting sources of renewable energy through solar,
9 wind, and biomass energy production projects that pose less risk to our coastal environment and
10 economic health before using uncertain methods such as seismic blasting for offshore oil and gas
11 exploration.

12 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, that the
13 Council opposes offshore oil and gas development in the mid-Atlantic Ocean adjacent to the
14 Maryland Coast in general and has even greater concern about, and opposition to, the use of
15 seismic blasting technology in the pursuit of such development.

16 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
17 Governor, the Maryland House and Senate Delegations to the 113th Congress, the Baltimore City
18 Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly, the Director of Public Works, and the Mayor’s
19 Legislative Liaison to the City Council.