



March 23, 2025

The Honorable Jefferson Van Drew
United States House of Representatives
2447 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Van Drew,

It has come to our attention that offshore oil drilling is being considered by Congress through the Budget Reconciliation process. On behalf of the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce and the over 875 businesses we represent, I am writing to express our strong and unwavering opposition to any proposals that would permit offshore oil and gas drilling along the coast of New Jersey. As you know, the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce has a long history of opposing oil exploration and drilling activities along the Jersey coast and adjacent waters, while promoting tourism, and advocating for our beautiful beaches. As such you have supported our opposition to activities that would industrialize our ocean in the past (i.e. wind energy) and we continue to oppose these activities today. We ask that you please stand up for all the residents, beaches and coastal economies in your District and oppose any language that could subject the Jersey shore to the potential catastrophic negative impacts from offshore fossil fuel energy exploration and extraction activities.

We thank you in advance for standing with us in keeping oil and gas drilling and any activity that industrializes our precious ocean and our white sandy shores. Cape May County's economy is intrinsically linked to the health of our coastal and marine environments. Tourism, fishing, and outdoor recreation are the lifeblood of our region, supporting more than 26,000 jobs and generating over \$7.6 billion annually in tourism revenue alone. Offshore oil and gas drilling poses a direct threat to these industries and the families who rely on them.

We are all in agreement that offshore oil drilling and spilling would be devastating to our coastal economy. Republicans and Democrats alike in New Jersey have been against offshore oil drilling for years. Given the chance to simply vote up or down on that, we know all New Jersey Members of Congress would vote against offshore oil drilling and in favor of clean healthy beaches.

Even the perception of risk from any energy exploration activity—let alone the potential for spills or industrialization of our seascape—can damage the pristine image of the Jersey Shore and deter visitors. Moreover, the negative long-term environmental impacts to marine life, water quality, and our beaches are incompatible with our values and way of life.

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Mission: To stimulate the growth and prosperity of members and communities in Cape May County through advocacy, services, education, collaboration, and leadership.

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce has consistently opposed offshore oil and gas drilling in the Atlantic, and we remain committed to preserving the natural resources that make our region unique. We respectfully urge you again to oppose any legislation or federal action that would allow offshore oil and gas drilling off our coast.

We understand that voting against offshore drilling when it is part of Budget Reconciliation will be much harder for you as a coastal Republican since it may also contain many policy objectives that will not negatively impact the people of your District. We are asking if you could have offshore oil and gas exploration off the coast of New Jersey removed from the debate. Please signal to House Speaker Mike Johnson and to Natural Resources Committee Chair Bruce Westerman of Arkansas that you do not want oil and gas drilling off New Jersey's coast to be within the Budget Reconciliation package.

Thank you for your continued leadership and advocating for the people of your District, our precious beaches and waterways, and for standing with our coastal communities. I urge you to continue standing with New Jersey residents in protecting our coast. Please oppose any legislative efforts that would allow offshore fossil fuel exploration and extraction activities along our eastern seaboard.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue, and for your continued service to our District.

Sincerely,



Barbara Stafford Jones
President & CEO

cc: Cape May County Chamber Board of Directors
cc: Senator Cory A. Booker
cc: Senator Andy Kim
cc: Senator Michael Testa
cc: Assemblyman Antwan McClellan
cc: Assemblyman Erik Simonsen
cc: Cape May County Board of Commissioners
cc: Don Cabrera, President, Cape May County League of Municipalities
cc: Michele Siekerka, Esq., NJBIA
cc: Ben Rose, Chair, NJTIA
cc: Michele Gillian, Executive Director, Ocean City Regional Chamber of Commerce
cc: Doreen Talley, Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cape May
cc: Linda Williams, Executive Director, Lower Township Chamber of Commerce
cc: Tracey DuFault, Executive Director, Greater Wildwood Chamber of Commerce
cc: Mary Farrell, President, Middle Township Chamber of Commerce
cc: Marnie Lengle, Executive Director, Stone Harbor Chamber of Commerce