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Trump Attempts to Recklessly Expand Offshore Drilling

WASHINGTON (April 27, 2017) – President Trump directed his administration to begin work to expand offshore drilling. This could include seeking to revise the five-year leasing plan finalized last year and purports to reverse permanent protections against expanded offshore drilling in America’s Arctic and Atlantic oceans.

Alaska Wilderness League, Natural Resources Defense Council, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders, Earthjustice, Environment America, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Sierra Club, Ocean Conservation Research, Hands Across the Sand, League of Conservation Voters, Environment Investigation Agency, NextGen Climate, Surfrider Foundation, The Wilderness Society, Chukchi Sea Watch, Oil Change International, Pacific Environment, and Center for Water Advocacy made the following joint statement in response:

“The majority of Americans want to preserve our unspoiled Arctic and Atlantic oceans, not turn them over to private oil companies. They support permanent protection, which keeps these areas forever safe from the harms of offshore oil drilling.

President Trump may want to unravel this progress, but presidents do not have the executive authority to subject publicly held waters to offshore leasing that previous presidents have withdrawn.

These oceans are among the worst places for America to stake its energy future. Expanding drilling there would be reckless. And it would not yield oil for decades—long past the time we must shift to clean energy sources.

And the public has already spoken out in a ground swell of opposition to any expanded offshore drilling that puts our public oceans and coastal residents at grave risk, robs future generations of our still oil-free beaches, and makes climate change worse by repressing clean energy investments and driving pollution that harms our health.”

The new administration and its polluter cabinet may choose to ignore the need to act on climate change. That choice brings with it potentially catastrophic risks: sea level rise, extreme weather, increased health problems and costly damage to our communities.

It is urgent that we avert the most severe impacts of climate change, not hasten its damage. Pursuing dirty energy goals locks in carbon pollution and puts polluter profits over our health and safety.”

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