Add your name here: https://tinyurl.com/SciSignOn by November 18, 2021.

Thank you for your support! Please feel free to share this letter with other scientists.

Questions? Please contact Dr. Sarah Giltz via email sgiltz@oceana.org

November XX, 2021

Dear Mr. President and Members of Congress:

As scientists, we write to you, united in our concern about offshore drilling's impact on marine ecosystems and its contribution to the climate crisis. We urge Congress to pass the existing provisions to permanently ban new offshore oil and gas leasing in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Florida's Gulf Coast in the Build Back Better Act. We also ask President Biden to cancel all future offshore drilling lease sales. Offshore drilling is a threat to marine life and coastal economies that rely on a vibrant ocean. Our health and planet depend on a rapid transition to clean, renewable energy, and we should not be investing in new fossil fuel extraction.

Offshore drilling exacerbates the climate crisis.

Climate change threatens the health of our ocean.[1] If we continue on our current path, the expected increases in temperature, increases in extreme weather, and rising sea levels will wreak havoc on coastal communities and put marine life at risk. These catastrophic impacts will displace people and cause suffering across the planet.[2,3]

A policy to protect all unleased federal waters from offshore drilling in the United States could prevent over 19 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions as well as more than $720 billion in damages to people, property, and the environment.[4] We cannot afford more drilling and its associated climate pollution if we are to reach our greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

Our coasts should be protected from another BP *Deepwater Horizon* catastrophe.

In 2010, the BP *Deepwater Horizon* exploded and spewed over 200 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico.[5] Fisheries closed, demand for Gulf seafood plummeted, and losses in the seafood industry are estimated at nearly $1 billion.[6] After the BP disaster, boating, fishing, and beach visits dropped across the region and the recreation industry lost more than $500 million in revenue.[7,8] Toxic oil destroyed wetlands and killed marine wildlife including commercially valuable fish. Lasting impacts from the spill continue to this day.

Just last month, another oil disaster killed birds and fish off California's coast. Fisheries there remain closed in the wake of an offshore pipeline rupture that spread oil across sandy beaches and vibrant wetlands.[9] We cannot allow private corporations to continue to extract offshore oil and gas and risk the health of our ocean. Simply put, where they drill, they spill.

Offshore oil drilling generates chronic pollution.

Coastal industrialization and pollution from offshore drilling threaten local communities. In addition to hundreds of oil spills each year, standard operating procedures for oil and gas extraction generate radioactive waste, polluted water, and sludge.[10,11] More than 18 billion barrels of waste fluids from oil and gas production are produced annually in the United States.[12] Moreover, communities of color are often disproportionately impacted by environmental pollution.[13] We must transition to clean energy and create a healthier future for ourselves and our oceans.

Preventing new offshore drilling will protect coastal communities from devastating pollution, support healthy marine ecosystems, and move forward our clean energy future. The time for action is now.

Sincerely,

Affiliations will be listed for identification purposes only.

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