

**CALIFORNIA STATE
LANDS COMMISSION**

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AS PROPOSED BY STAFF**RESOLUTION BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION
REQUESTING THAT CONGRESS CONTINUE TO ENACT, AND THE
PRESIDENT REINSTITUTE, THE MORATORIUM ON OIL AND GAS
LEASING WITHIN PROTECTED OFFSHORE AREAS**

WHEREAS, California is blessed with spectacular resources along its entire 1,100 mile coast, which includes ocean habitats that contain some of the most biologically diverse natural communities in the world; and

WHEREAS, the Pacific Ocean serves as a source of food, recreation, and employment, and provides a critical transportation link between California and other states and nations; and

WHEREAS, California has the largest ocean economy in the United States, ranking number one overall for both employment and gross state product; and

WHEREAS, the California State Lands Commission has jurisdiction over the state-owned tide and submerged lands from the shoreline out three nautical miles into the Pacific Ocean, as well as the lands underlying California's bays, lakes, and rivers; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is charged with managing these lands pursuant to the Public Trust Doctrine, a common law precept that requires these lands be protected for public use and needs involving commerce by means of navigation, fisheries, water related recreation and environmental protection; and

WHEREAS, on July 14, 2008, President George W. Bush lifted the presidential moratorium on leasing or preleasing activity in protected areas in the Outer Continental Shelf, which was first established in 1990 by President George H.W. Bush and extended by President Bill Clinton in 1998; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted its own moratorium on leasing in most federal offshore lands in 1982, which has since been enacted each fiscal year in the Department of the Interior's appropriations bill, and

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush, citing soaring energy prices, is asking Congress to lift its moratorium on offshore leasing so oil and gas drilling can occur in areas that are currently protected from such activities; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Minerals Management Service, oil companies in this country now hold over seven thousand leases to drill offshore, yet only around twenty percent of those leases are in production; and

WHEREAS, nearly eighty percent of the nation's offshore oil is already available for leasing, which amounts to approximately fifty-four billion barrels of oil that could be tapped without lifting the moratorium; and

WHEREAS, according to a U.S. Energy Information Administration report, drilling access to the protected offshore areas would not have a significant impact on domestic crude oil and natural gas production or prices before 2030; and

WHEREAS, according to the same report, if Congress lifts its moratorium, and assuming that local infrastructure issues and other potential non-Federal impediments are resolved, leasing of the protected offshore areas for oil and gas drilling could begin no sooner than 2012, and production could not be expected to start before 2017; and

WHEREAS, the proponents of both the presidential and congressional moratorium contend that offshore drilling would pose unacceptable environmental risks and threaten coastal tourism industries; and

WHEREAS, expanding offshore drilling does not help the country rid itself of its dependency on oil, nor does it help move the country towards an energy policy that reduces its greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, Governor Schwarzenegger has united with the governors of Oregon and Washington in a bipartisan effort to commit to renewable energy sources instead of increasing our dependence on fossil fuel; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is seriously dedicated to a policy that is supportive of renewable energy development and less dependant on fossil fuel; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is unwilling to put the lands it holds as trustee at risk, environmentally and economically, for the sake of new energy exploration in the Outer Continental Shelf; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION, that it requests Congress to continue to enact its moratorium on oil and gas leasing within protected offshore areas; and be it further

RESOLVED, that it encourages President George W. Bush to reinstitute the presidential moratorium on leasing or preleasing activity in the areas protected by the previous presidential moratorium; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Commission's Executive Officer transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Governor of California, to the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, to the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.