

Honorable Mayor William D. Sessoms Jr. and Honorable Council Members
Municipal Center, City Hall Building 1
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Commonwealth of Virginia State House of Delegate Barry D. Knight
832 Mill Landing Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23457

Commonwealth of Virginia State Senator Jeffrey L. McWaters
1207 Laskin Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

US House of Representative E. Scott Rigell
418 Cannon NOB
Washington DC 20515

US Senator Mark R. Warner
475 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

US Senator Tim Kane
388 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington DC 20500

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Mr. Geoffrey L. Wikel, Acting Chief, Division of Environmental Assessment
Office of Environmental Programs (HM 3107)
381 Elden St
Herndon, VA 20170-4817

In response to serious potential economic and environmental threats posed by off-shore oil and gas drilling, the Sandbridge Civic League (SCL) has taken a position against drilling in the Atlantic coastal zone as outlined by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. The Sandbridge community stretches approximately 4.5 miles along the Atlantic coast and generates a substantial portion of Virginia Beach's 1.2 billion dollars in tourist revenue per year. In 2005 the SCL expressed like concern by requesting then Governor Warner to oppose legislation granting oil drilling off our coast.

Spills in the study area associated with oil drilling (transport and construction) could have significant detrimental impacts along most of the Atlantic coast and its tributaries. The recent Gulf catastrophe oiled 1,000 miles of coast line. If such a spill originated off the east coast, it could contaminate shore lines for years along some of the most densely populated and environmentally sensitive areas of the country. Even smaller incidences could taint Sandbridge, the adjacent Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (home to rare and endangered marine and wildlife), the Outer Banks National Seashores, and thousands of miles of shore line along the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries. Virginia Beach alone contains more than 240 miles of tidal ocean, bay, and river shorelines within a few miles of potential oil spills. The economic impact of a major spill on fisheries including blue crab, oyster, and other commercial and sport fishing would be catastrophic, as would, losing a substantial portion of the 6 million overnight visitors Virginia Beach attracts per year.

Please consider the broad economic and environmental impacts and the host of renewable alternatives to fossil fuels when deliberating over the south Atlantic coast drilling zone. The SCL stands opposed to this drilling. Thank you for your consideration and representation.

Respectfully,

Joan Davis

President, Sandbridge Civic League

cc: each person listed in the address field above