



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #15b

DATE: JUNE 7, 2010

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: DRAFT LETTERS RELATED TO OFFSHORE DRILLING IN STATE AND FEDERAL WATERS

As directed by the Board, please find herewith draft letters related to offshore drilling in state and federal waters for your review and discussion.

Recommendation

Information only.

Letter #1 (Base Letter) – DISTRIBUTION:

Senate President Jeff Atwater
Senate President-designate Mike Harridopolos
House Speaker Larry Cretul
House Speaker-designate Dean Cannon

Dear _____ :

The Council Board would like to thank you for delaying the consideration of proposals that would have removed the ban on leasing and permitting oil and gas exploration and production activities in Florida's territorial coastal waters. As the Deepwater Horizon spill has demonstrated, there are inherent risks in deepwater oil drilling off Florida's coast.

We share in the growing concern that the Gulf of Mexico loop current may soon carry oil from the Deepwater Horizon spill toward South Florida's shores. This will have serious implications for the Southeast Florida region, including Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward counties, and fragile resources such as the Florida Keys, Biscayne Bay, and the Florida Everglades. Among our concerns are the detrimental and potentially long lasting impacts to our environment, fisheries, reefs and beaches, and other natural resources. A particular concern is the effect on our economy which is driven in large part by tourism and water-related industries.

The Council believes that the risk posed by offshore oil drilling in Florida's territorial coastal waters outweighs potential, finite benefits and is inconsistent with Florida's plan for managing its coastal natural resources. At this time, we ask that you please continue to oppose proposals that would permit oil and gas exploration and production activities in Florida's coastal waters. We support legislative action that will foster the creation and increased use of alternative, renewable fuels and lessen our nation's dependence on foreign fossil fuels.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of our position. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Carolyn Dekle, executive director of the Council, if we can provide you with further information or otherwise be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph Scutto
Chair

**LETTER #2 – DISTRIBUTION:
Governor Charlie Crist**

Dear Governor Crist:

We share in the growing concern that the Gulf of Mexico loop current may soon carry oil from the Deepwater Horizon spill toward South Florida's shores. This will have serious implications for the Southeast Florida region, including Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward counties, and fragile resources such as the Florida Keys, Biscayne Bay, and the Florida Everglades. Among our concerns are the detrimental and potentially long lasting impacts to our environment, fisheries, reefs and beaches, and other natural resources. A particular concern is the effect on our economy which is driven in large part by tourism and water-related industries.

The Council believes that the risk posed by offshore oil drilling in Florida's territorial coastal waters outweighs potential, finite benefits and is inconsistent with Florida's plan for managing its coastal natural resources. At this time, we ask that you please continue to oppose proposals that would permit oil and gas exploration and production activities in Florida's coastal waters. We support legislative action that will foster the creation and increased use of alternative, renewable fuels and lessen our nation's dependence on foreign fossil fuels. In addition, we oppose any proposed change to federal law that would allow drilling within 125 miles of Florida's coast.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of our position. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Carolyn Dekle, executive director of the Council, if we can provide you with further information or otherwise be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph Scotto
Chair

LETTER #3 - POTENTIAL DISTRIBUTION:

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION; US SENATORS NELSON AND LEMIEUX; PRESIDENT BARAK OBAMA; SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI; PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, VP JOE BIDEN

Dear

The South Florida Regional Planning Council is a regional, public policy agency serving Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward Counties and more than 4.2 million residents. The Council is governed by a unique public / private sector board comprised of 19 voting members of county and city elected officials, Governor's appointees, and ex-officio members.

We share in the growing concern that the Gulf of Mexico loop current may soon carry oil from the Deepwater Horizon spill toward South Florida's shores. This will have serious implications for the Southeast Florida region, including Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward counties, and fragile resources such as the Florida Keys, Biscayne Bay, and the Florida Everglades. Among our concerns are the detrimental and potentially long lasting impacts to our environment, fisheries, reefs and beaches, and other natural resources. A particular concern is the effect on our economy which is driven in large part by tourism and water-related industries.

We ask that you please oppose proposals that would permit oil and gas exploration and production activities within 125 miles of Florida's coast. The Council believes that the risk posed by offshore oil drilling in proximity to Florida's coast outweighs potential, finite benefits and is inconsistent with Florida's plan for managing its coastal natural resources. We support legislative action that will foster the creation and increased use of alternative, renewable fuels and lessen our nation's dependence on foreign fossil fuels.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of our position. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Carolyn Dekle, executive director of the Council, if we can provide you with further information or otherwise be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph Scuotto
Chair