

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HOLLY J. MITCHELL AND  
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February 10, 2026

**Oppose New and Existing Offshore Oil Drilling, Gas Drilling, and Deep Seabed Mining**

On November 11, 2025, the United States (U.S.) Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) presented a Draft Proposed Program (DPP) for opening our California coastline to new oil and gas drilling lease sales for the first time since 1984, while failing to hold any official public hearings in the affected communities. On January 26, 2026, in a departure from precedent, BOEM invited industry to submit new “nominations” indicating where they would like to drill on the Southern and Central California Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) even though the leasing program has not yet been finalized. Furthermore, on April 24, 2025, President Trump signed Executive Order 14285, *Unleashing America’s Offshore Critical Minerals and Resources*, authorizing deep seabed mining. These irresponsible proposals threaten our iconic California seaboard, jeopardize our thriving coastal economy, risk pollutant intrusion into groundwater, imperil our legendary wildlife, and risk lives. Los Angeles County (County) rejects any and all efforts at new oil and gas drilling or deep seabed mining off the California coast.

On January 22, 2026, the County expressed its strong opposition to the inclusion of the Southern California Planning Area in the DPP via a letter submitted to the U.S.

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Department of the Interior.<sup>1</sup> To supplement the County's public comment and respond directly to BOEM's call for nominations, the County must re-affirm its opposition to all new and expanded offshore drilling and mining activities, formally register its opposition to existing coastal drilling, and submit to BOEM a "negative nomination" for all California OCS tracts under consideration.

The County's letter listed four critical areas of conflict with the proposed leasing plan: (1) the unacceptable risk posed to marine life and the "Blue Economy," including threats to the region's economic vitality from potential oil spills and impacts to a designated Biologically Important Area for the endangered blue whale; (2) the proposal's fundamental incompatibility with our Local Coastal Programs and the Climate Action Plan; (3) violation of federal and state laws, including the lack of proper balance required by the OCS Lands Act; and (4) conflicts with other federal mandates, including air quality standards and military readiness, particularly mission-critical Department of Defense operating areas such as Vandenberg Space Force Base and Point Mugu Sea Range.

Past oil spills in the U.S. have wreaked havoc on our oceans, coastlines, wildlife, and economy. The Deepwater Horizon disaster killed 11 workers, dumped 134 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico, and caused over \$3 billion in losses to fishing and tourism industries along the Gulf.<sup>2</sup> More recently and more locally, the 2015 Santa Barbara Refugio Spill released 123,000 gallons of crude oil, resulting in millions of dollars of damage and the shutdown of 138 square miles of fisheries for six weeks.<sup>3</sup> Other major California spills<sup>4</sup> include the 2021 Amplify Spill near Huntington Beach (25,000 gallons); the Cusco Busan Spill at the Bay Bridge (53,569 gallons); the American Trader Spill near Huntington Beach (416,000 gallons); the Shell Martinez Spill in the Bay (400,000 gallons); the Apex Houston spill near Long Beach (25,800 gallons); and, of course, the 1969 Union Oil Spill that dumped 3 million gallons into the Santa Barbara Channel, covered 800 square miles with tar-black pitch, and spurred the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Water Act.<sup>5</sup> These are just the major spills; California records show an average of 70 oil spills statewide per month in the final

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/BOEM-2025-0483-4972>

<sup>2</sup> [https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/msc\\_facpub/1823/](https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/msc_facpub/1823/)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/OSPR/Science/Laboratories/Chemistry/Special-Projects/Fishery-Closure>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.coastkeeper.org/spill-timeline/>

<sup>5</sup> [https://response.restoration.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/Oil\\_Spill\\_Case\\_Histories.pdf](https://response.restoration.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/Oil_Spill_Case_Histories.pdf) .

months of 2025.<sup>6</sup>

Protecting our coastline from drilling also avoids carbon emissions; an analysis by Oceana found that protecting all unleased federal waters from offshore drilling in the U.S. could prevent over 19 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions – the equivalent of taking every car in the nation off the road for 15 years. They also found it could prevent \$720 billion in damages and safeguard the U.S. clean coast economy, which collectively supports around 3.3 million American jobs.<sup>7</sup>

Local governments and municipalities across the state and country are forming alliances to oppose offshore drilling. On June 16, 2025, California Attorney General Rob Bonta joined a coalition of 10 attorney generals from Maryland, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington to file a joint comment letter with BOEM opposing offshore oil and gas drilling in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.<sup>8</sup> Twenty-six members of the California Congressional delegation and both U.S. Senators from California also filed letters of opposition.<sup>9</sup> As of January, the Counties of Humboldt, Mendocino, Marin, Sonoma, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Diego have all joined the Local Governmental OCS Coordination program to work collaboratively to oppose offshore drilling.

Oil demand in California peaked in 2017,<sup>10</sup> and statewide electric vehicle sales hit a record high of 29.1% of all new cars registered in California in the third quarter of 2025.<sup>11</sup> Our state is moving away from oil consumption and oil drilling. The County has already taken action to phase out oil drilling and is actively working to realize a policy that will end all neighborhood drilling and clean up old drilling sites.<sup>12</sup>

Four decades ago, the “Blue Wall,” a line of 27 cities along California’s coastline worked to use local zoning laws to block all onshore facilities and infrastructure needed to support offshore drilling, such as pipelines, dewatering facilities, storage yards, etc.<sup>13</sup> California Assembly Bill 3233 (2024) affirms that local municipalities have authority to

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<sup>6</sup> <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/12122025/california-oil-field-spills/#:~:text=Over%20the%20past%20three%20months,oil%20into%20the%20Pacific%20Ocean> .

<sup>7</sup> <https://usa.oceana.org/reports/permanent-protections-offshore-drilling-benefit-coastal-economies-and-help/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/Request%20for%20Information%20and%20Comments%20on%20the%20Preparation%20of%20the%2011th%20National%20Outer%20Continental%20Shelf%20Oil%20and%20Gas%20Leasing%20Program.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.padilla.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/Sen-Padilla-and-HNR-RM-Huffman\\_CA-Delegation-Letter-to-POTUS-and-DOI-re-Offshore-Drilling-Plans.pdf](https://www.padilla.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/Sen-Padilla-and-HNR-RM-Huffman_CA-Delegation-Letter-to-POTUS-and-DOI-re-Offshore-Drilling-Plans.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.eia.gov/states/ca/data/dashboard/crude-oil-petroleum>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2025/10/13/record-breaking-quarter-california-reaches-historic-high-in-zev-sales/>

<sup>12</sup> [https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/sop/1131400\\_092722.pdf](https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/sop/1131400_092722.pdf), item 8

<sup>13</sup> <https://lookout.co/californias-coastal-blue-wall-must-rise-again-to-stop-new-offshore-drilling/story>

regulate, limit, or prohibit oil and gas operations within their jurisdictions, and the County is currently amending our General Plan and Zoning Code to prohibit new onshore fuel facilities.<sup>14</sup> Given the speed with which BOEM’s leasing process is moving forward, the County must redouble its efforts and reaffirm its intention to prohibit all onshore functions that would support offshore oil and gas drilling and deep seabed mining.

**WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. Direct the Chief Executive Officer, through the Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Branch (CEO-LAIR) to join the Local Government Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Coordination Program on behalf of the County of Los Angeles.
2. Direct the Chief Sustainability Officer , and the Directors of the Department of Beaches and Harbors, Department of Regional Planning (DRP), and Department of Public Works – Office of Oil and Gas, in consultation with County Counsel, to submit public comments via the Federal Register in response to the United States Bureau of Ocean Energy Management’s January 26, 2026, Call for Nominations designating a “negative nomination” for all of California’s OCS tracts under consideration. Comments should be submitted to both the Central and Southern OCS Planning Regions to address the regionwide impacts of drilling.
3. Direct CEO-LAIR to oppose any proposals that would increase or expand offshore oil and gas drilling and deep seabed mining and urge federal and state decision-makers to permanently prohibit offshore drilling and deep seabed mining in all U.S. waters, including the Pacific Ocean off the coast of California.
4. Direct the Director of DRP to report back to the Board in writing within 60 days on the progress and feasibility of prohibiting onshore facilities that would support offshore oil and gas drilling and deep seabed mining.
5. Authorize County Counsel to initiate, join, participate in, or support litigation including amicus filings, aimed at protecting California’s coastal communities, economies, and ecosystems from offshore drilling and mining, and to provide periodic updates to the Board of Supervisors, as necessary.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/BOEM-2025-0483-4972>