

DPP as well as formal scoping for a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the 2019-2024 Program; and

Whereas, this new plan includes the entire Atlantic Ocean from Maine to Florida, including the waters off New Jersey within 3 miles of beaches, as well as including other ocean areas totaling some 90% of US ocean waters; and

Whereas, New Jersey boasts over 127 miles of beautiful ocean coastline and hundreds of miles of back-bays, estuaries, and other waterways connected to the Atlantic Ocean; and

Whereas, the Jersey Shore is essential to the health of the our communities, environment and the thriving economy of New Jersey; and

Whereas, the physical, hydrodynamic, and biological characteristics of the ocean off the Jersey Shore are unique in the world, as more than 300 species of fish, nearly 350 species of birds, 5 species of sea turtles, and many marine mammals such as 20 species of whales and dolphins, 1 species of porpoise, and 4 species of seals, frequent this region. Nine endangered species, four of which are whales, can be found in these ocean waters, including the Atlantic Right Whale, one of the world's most endangered marine mammals. The region also serves as an essential migratory pathway for many of these species; and

Whereas, the Jersey Shore sustains the economy of the region with its bounty of natural resources and intrinsic values for millions of people through tourism. Tourism brings more than \$44 billion to NJ's economy each year and provides jobs to more than 500,000 people with \$6.2 billion generated in Cape May County alone; and

Whereas, recreational and commercial fisheries in NJ provide enormous economic benefits, including revenue, food production, and recreational activities with the port of Cape May and Wildwood ranking as the second largest seaport on the east coast. In 2014, recreational fishing supported nearly 20,000 jobs and resulted in \$2 billion of retail sales. Commercial fishing supports nearly 7,300 jobs and provides \$152 million in landings, not including restaurant and retail sales; and

Whereas, current estimates of the amount of technically recoverable oil off the entire Atlantic coast from Maine to Florida would only last the nation approximately 229 days, and the amount of technically recoverable gas would only last approximately 562 days; and

Whereas, offshore oil and gas development, causes substantial environmental impacts, including: (a) onshore damage due to infrastructure, (b) water pollution from drilling muds and the water brought-up from a well with oil and gas (called "produced waters"), (c) noise from seismic surveys, (d) air pollution, and (e) oil spills; and

Whereas, the harmful environmental consequences of offshore oil and gas exploration and development are serious and threatens the environmental and economic assets of New Jersey; and

Whereas, The BP Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico (2010) is clear evidence of the dangers associated with offshore drilling, including costing the lives of 11 people, devastating coastal economies and countless livelihoods, and killing countless marine animals, as well as continuing to cause harm to marine life as documented by a steady flow of studies; and

Whereas, Federal Administration officials are also weakening protections of ocean resources by undermining rules and regulations, cutting funding sources for spill response; and

Whereas, oil spills travel vast distances, and the Gulf Stream and Labrador Ocean

Current all flow toward New Jersey making the region vulnerable to impacts from spills anywhere in the Atlantic Ocean; and

Whereas, Within 5 days of the release of the DPP Governor Scott from Florida was able to convince Department of Interior Secretary Zinke to remove Florida from further consideration for drilling due to the importance of coastal tourism to that state and NJ shares this same economic dependence on tourism and clean ocean economies;

Whereas, bi-partisan opposition against drilling off the New Jersey coast has included every Governor since 1985, and a majority of the congressional delegation and most coastal towns; and

Whereas, in the January 8, 2018, BOEM Federal Register to requests comments on the Draft Proposed Program (DPP) and scoping comments for the Programmatic Environmental Impact Study

Whereas, energy conservation and efficiency measures can significantly reduce the nation's need to explore and drill for non-renewable resources, such as oil and natural gas; and

Whereas, coastal municipalities have a profound interest in maintaining strong federal protections for our nation's coastal environment, as well as the economic and social benefits it supports;

Now, therefore, be it resolved on March 5, 2018, that the Greater Atlantic City Chamber hereby opposes offshore oil and gas exploration and drilling activities that would affect the coast of New Jersey, and calls upon Secretary of the Interior Ryan K. Zinke who oversees the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to withdraw New Jersey and the entire Atlantic Ocean from consideration for the offshore oil and gas exploration, development, or drilling.

JOSEPH D. KELLY,
President.

OCEAN CITY REGIONAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND VISITORS SERVICES,

Ocean City, NJ, February 6, 2019.

Congressman JEFF VAN DREW,
Mays Landing, NJ.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN VAN DREW: On behalf of the Ocean City Regional Chamber of Commerce, I would like to extend our endorsement of Atlantic Coastal Economies Protection Act to prohibit the Department of the Interior from issuing certain geological and geophysical exploration permits under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, and for other purposes.

The Ocean City Regional Chamber of Commerce, which is comprised of more than 550 member businesses, strongly supports this act as we are against seismic airgun blasting in the Atlantic Ocean.

We stand by you and your support of the Atlantic Coastal Economies Protection Act.

Kindest regards,

MICHELE GILLIAN,
Executive Director.

GREATER VINELAND CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE,

Vineland, NJ, February 7, 2019.

U.S. Representative JEFFREY VAN DREW,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN VAN DREW: On behalf of our organization, including more than 450 members, we write this letter as an endorsement of your proposed bill, known as the "Atlantic Coastal Economies Protection Act", to prohibit the Department of Interior from issuing certain geological and geophysical exploration permits under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, and for other purposes.

We agree that seismic air-gun blasting in the Atlantic Ocean has the potential to harm

or kill marine mammals and other marine life that are vital to our region's coastal economies. We are also wary that the survey data collected is not available to the public.

Thank you for your efforts in proposing this bill.

Sincerely,

DAWN S. HUNTER,
Executive Director.

VISITS TO RICHLAND, CAMBRIA HEIGHTS, AND PURCHASE LINE HIGH SCHOOLS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, over the past couple of weeks I had the honor of visiting three high schools in my district, the Richland High School, near Johnstown, Cambria Heights High School, in Patton, and Purchase Line High School in Commodore, Pennsylvania.

As a senior member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I love speaking with students about their learning experiences, and hearing from faculty and staff as well.

Last week, the Richland School District invited me to join them for their Teacher-in-Service event with award-winning educator and principal, Salome Thomas-El. It was a pleasure to be with educators from the Cambria County area to hear the ways that we can work together to improve education in America.

I enjoyed hearing Mr. Thomas-El discuss the change in attitudes and strategies of school staff, parents, and members of the community to help the students in most need of guidance. He is currently the head of the Thomas Edison Charter School in Wilmington, and before that, began his career as a teacher and chess coach at Vaux Middle School.

Since then, he has published several books, received prestigious awards, appeared on television, and Disney recently optioned the movie rights to his best-selling book titled "I Chose to Stay." He has committed more than 20 years of his life to answering the question of how to ensure that every child achieves their greatest potential.

The question is one that all educators seek to answer and even policymakers in Congress; and that is why I will continue to support legislation and initiatives that meet the needs and grow the potential of every student.

We must also address family poverty, child nutrition, community violence, and other barriers that affect student success.

As Mr. Thomas-El says, All children can and will learn as long as they have adults who care enough. And he is right. In order for our country's students to truly succeed, they need the support from adults at home, in the classroom, and throughout their communities.

I left the in-service event with Richland School District encouraged and

confident that our educators are providing essential support to their students.

That feeling stayed with me the next day as I visited Cambria Heights High School. There, I met with students representing music, athletics, student council, and vocational programs at the school. Students showed me the ongoing renovations to the high school building as part of a major renovation of the classrooms and the cafeteria.

They also shared with me their many accomplishments that included earning top scores in the county on the State's Keystone Exams for literature and biology.

Earlier this week I participated in an assembly at the Purchase Line High School in Indiana County. The students asked great questions about civic engagement, and we had an open dialogue about the challenges and the opportunities that are facing our Nation.

Meeting with all these students gives me great hope for the future, and I know these students will become our next generation of leaders, regardless of what fields they enter after graduation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Richland School District, Cambria Heights High School, and the Purchase Line High School for inviting me into their schools and sharing with me the ways they are transforming education to help students not only graduate, but go on to earn a higher degree or a certification or, quite frankly, go successfully into the workforce.

A good education opens so many doors in life. I am tremendously proud of the students, faculty, and staff of each of these outstanding institutions.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 27 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

During these days on the Hill, there are many Americans walking the halls, speaking to their Representatives about interests of great concern to them. The American Osteopathic Society, the National Kidney Foundation, the VFW, the National Down Syndrome Society, the Lupus Foundation, the Boy and Girl Scouts of America,

among others, have been advocates for so many who are in need.

We thank You that we live in a nation blessed by the rights and opportunities for Americans to petition their government.

Bless the Members of this assembly, who know best how to respond to such entreaties, with the ability to meet so many needs.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CLEANING UP OUR DEMOCRACY AND DELIVERING POWER BACK TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. KIM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIM. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the efforts in Congress to clean up our democracy and deliver power back to the American people.

I never thought that I would run for Congress. I never thought that I would have the chance to stand right here on

the floor of the House of Representatives.

I am here today because I was tired of watching corporations and special interests cutting to the front of the line ahead of the people. I was tired of watching dark money grow, gerrymandering polarize our politics, and the American people pushed aside.

Now we have a precious chance to fix this and to build the kind of government the American people deserve. As we make up our minds and cast our votes, I ask us not to think of this as a partisan issue. I assure you that the people in my district on both sides believe that the system isn't working for them.

I call on my colleagues to vote to pass H.R. 1 and deliver the change our constituents demand and deserve.

NATIONAL DAY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Congressional Ambassador Bulgaria Caucus, I appreciate Ambassador Tihomir Stoytchev and Mrs. Lubka Stoytchev for their hosting a reception yesterday in recognition of National Day of the Republic of Bulgaria at the Library of Congress, celebrating 141 years of liberation.

Bulgaria is a close strategic ally and partner of the United States. This month, we celebrate 15 years since Bulgaria joined the NATO alliance.

During his time recently in Sofia, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg noted: "Bulgaria has contributed to strengthening the Alliance." He also thanked Prime Minister Boyko Borissov for his government's commitment to reach the NATO defense spending goal of 2 percent.

I am confident the partnership between the United States and Bulgaria will continue to grow in the years ahead. It will be mutually beneficial to promote peace through strength.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

CONSTITUENTS SHOULD BE THE TOP PRIORITY

(Mrs. KIRKPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, our constituents sent us here to represent them, to be a voice for their families, to fight for their values, to vote in their best interest. I am here for the residents of Arizona's Second Congressional District. I am here to work for them.

We must reject the culture of corruption here and put the power back in the hands of the people we represent. Our government works best when it is focused on people and American families,