

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Joint Resolution 11 (Senator Mathias, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Rules and Executive Nominations

Coastal Area - Protection From Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling

This joint resolution expresses the General Assembly's strong and unequivocal opposition to the draft proposed National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2019-2024 and the implementation of any offshore oil or gas leasing, exploration, development, or production in the Atlantic Ocean. Further, the General Assembly urges (1) the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to remove Maryland from the proposed leasing program and (2) the U.S. Congress to maintain current safety and environmental protections for Maryland's coastal area and prohibit oil and gas drilling in federal waters off the coast of Maryland and in other locations that may adversely impact Maryland's coastal area.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The joint resolution does not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: In January 2018, the Trump administration announced plans to significantly expand offshore oil and gas drilling. By opening approximately 90% of the nation's outer continental shelf waters to oil and gas leases, the five-year plan reverses the Obama administration's ban on offshore drilling in approximately 94% of the nation's Outer Continental Shelf acreage. The plan marks the first time since the 1980s that oil companies have an opportunity to purchase new leases in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

The plan is part of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act. The Act requires the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to develop a five-year plan to sell oil and gas leases as part of the 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. The areas available for leasing are narrowed down through the three stages of the program – the Draft Proposed Program, the Proposed Program, and the Proposed Final Program. The Draft Proposed Program authorizes 47 potential lease sales in 25 of 26 planning areas. Nine of the leases are located in the Atlantic Ocean, with 3 of those leases located in the Mid-Atlantic.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of the Environment; U.S. Department of the Interior; Department of Legislative Services

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