

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. President and Secretary Burgum:

As Members of the California Congressional Delegation, we write in strong opposition to the inclusion of the Southern California and Central California Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Planning Areas in the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) ongoing offshore oil and gas leasing process. The recent announcement of a public comment period on potential leasing in these regions — separate from the 60-day comment period that concluded on January 23, 2026 for the Draft Proposed Program (DPP) of the 11th National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program — has raised significant concerns among our constituents and stakeholders.

Since the devastating 1969 oil spill in Santa Barbara, California, there has not been a new or expanded lease in California state waters since 1969 or one in federal waters since 1984. This is in recognition that the waters off the coasts of Southern and Central California are economically and ecologically invaluable. Across the country, many of our communities depend on recreational and commercial fishing, tourism, outdoor recreation, and other industries that can be directly harmed by incompatible energy development. California's coastal economy supports roughly 511,000 jobs and generates over \$51.3 billion in GDP from marine-economy activities — largely in tourism and recreation — meaning that new offshore drilling could jeopardize the livelihoods of thousands of working families. The 2015 Refugio oil spill and the 2021 Huntington Beach oil spill further underscored the ongoing risks of offshore drilling and reinforced our strong opposition to any expansion of offshore oil and gas development.

In addition to the environmental and economic risks, offshore oil and gas development in the Southern and Central California OCS Planning Areas poses serious threats to military readiness and national security. California is home to the largest concentration of military forces in the nation, including more than 30 major installations and over 200,000 active-duty and reserve personnel. The Southern California coast supports some of the military's most critical training and readiness activities, including multiple offshore range complexes and testing areas that span more than 156,000 square nautical miles.

These waters are essential to the operations of the U.S. Navy's Third Fleet and the First Marine Expeditionary Force, which together form a cornerstone of U.S. power projection in the Pacific. Introducing additional offshore drilling infrastructure and associated hazardous materials into this already congested and mission-critical maritime space would increase operational risk, complicate training and testing activities, and heighten the potential for catastrophic consequences in the event of a spill—placing both military personnel and national security interests at unnecessary risk.

The administration's leasing plan is a significant concern to Californians regardless of political affiliation, as both Democratic- and Republican-led cities have passed resolutions opposing new drilling in the Pacific. Moreover, our constituents have just engaged in a robust 60-day public review of the five-year offshore leasing plan released on November 24, 2025 and closed January 23, 2026—where they submitted hundreds of

thousands of comments during that period. Many of those comments directly addressed federal oil and gas leasing in the Pacific and the associated risks to coastal ecosystems and local economies.

For these reasons, we respectfully request a 90-day extension of the current public comment period on offshore oil and gas leasing in the Southern and Central California OCS Planning Areas. An extension will ensure that residents, local governments, Tribal Nations, small businesses, fishermen, environmental groups, and other stakeholders have adequate opportunity to review the proposal and submit comprehensive feedback that reflects the breadth of impacts this decision would entail.

We urge your Administration to consider this extension in the interest of transparency and meaningful public participation. And, as you continue to consider new drilling in the Southern and Central California OCS planning areas—we are categorically opposed to any new drilling. Instead, we urge your Administration to abandon these proposals in recognition of the unacceptable risks they pose to coastal communities, our regional and local economies, and national security.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, House Natural
Resources Committee



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Dave Min
Member of Congress



Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Nancy Pelosi
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Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
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John Garamendi
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Sara Jacobs
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Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



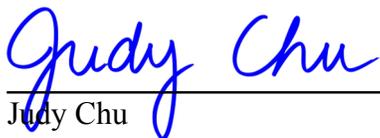
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Juan Vargas
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Brad Sherman
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Laura Friedman
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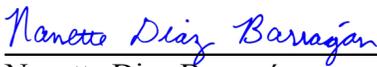
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Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



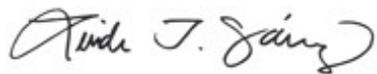
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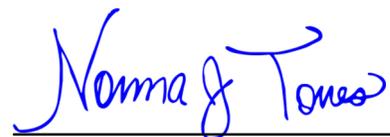
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