



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

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For More Information, Contact:
Aaron Fiedler: 503-986-1904
aaron.fiedler@oregonlegislature.gov

Offshore Drilling Ban Passes Oregon House

Legislation, which makes current ban permanent, now goes to the Governor

SALEM – Legislation to ban offshore oil and gas drilling in Oregon overwhelmingly passed the Oregon House of Representatives today.

[Senate Bill 256](#) makes permanent an existing ban on offshore drilling that was set to sunset in 2020. The legislation prohibits the Department of State Lands from leasing any submerged or submersible lands in the Oregon territorial sea for the exploration, development, or production of oil, gas, or sulfur.

“Oregon’s coastal economy is worth \$2.5 billion and supports 33,000 jobs,” said chief sponsor Rep. David Gomberg (D-Otis). “The potential and irreversible effects of oil pollution on marine ecosystems and maritime economies do not warrant the questionable, short-term benefits that might be gained from offshore oil and gas exploration.”

Joining Rep. Gomberg as a chief sponsor on the legislation are Rep. David Brock Smith (R-Port Orford) and Sen. Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay).

Communities up and down the Oregon Coast have voiced their support for the legislation. Port Orford, Newport, Lincoln City, Toledo, Yachats, and Gold Beach as well as the Siletz Tribal Council, Port of Toledo, and Port of Newport have all passed resolutions opposing new offshore drilling. In addition, more than 100 businesses are opposing offshore drilling through the Business Alliance for Protecting the Pacific.

“In my community, the ocean is a way of life,” said bill sponsor Rep. Caddy McKeown (D-Coos Bay). “So much of our economy is dependent upon healthy fisheries. This legislation is the right step in protecting communities from Astoria to Brookings.”

Rep. Tiffany Mitchell (D-Astoria) echoed her colleagues.

“I have heard from constituents that banning offshore drilling is a top priority,” Rep. Mitchell said. “Throughout the state’s history, Oregonians have always stepped up to protect our coastline when it was threatened. This legislation carries on that legacy by ensuring that no future generation will have to worry about the potentially disastrous impacts of offshore drilling.”

A bipartisan group of 25 legislators have signed on as sponsors of the bill.

This bill continues the Oregon House Democrats' work of protecting our environment and defending Oregon's natural beauty through policies that protect the air we breathe, the water we drink, the outdoor recreation we enjoy and the natural resources our state depends on. So far in 2019, the Oregon House has passed the Oregon Environmental Protection Act as well as a ban on fracking.

Senate Bill 256, which passed the House 47 to 8, now goes to Gov. Kate Brown.

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