



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

Oregon State Legislature
State Capitol
Salem, OR

NEWS RELEASE

February 18, 2010

CONTACT: Molly Woon (503) 986-1074
molly.woon@state.or.us

Senate votes to protect Oregon's coast, extend offshore drilling ban *House Bill 3613 extends prohibition until the year 2020*

SALEM – Oregon's coast will be safe from oil exploration for another decade with legislation passed this morning in the Oregon Senate. House Bill 3613 extends similar legislation passed in 2007 until the year 2020.

“Extending this ban sends a strong signal about both how we value Oregon's coast and our need to move away from oil dependence,” said Senator Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland), chair of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee. “This represents a significant step in protecting Oregon's coastal communities, our fishing industry, and our stunning coastal ecological diversity.”

The U.S. Mineral Management Service estimates that under the entire Oregon and Washington outer continental shelf, there are 400 million barrels of undiscovered oil. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, this amount would supply the entire country for only 20 days.

“Off shore drilling is a threat to Oregon's valuable commercial fishing, aquaculture, tourism and recreational sectors,” said Senator Joanne Verger (D-District 5), who represents Oregon's central coast. “The potential benefits of exploring the Oregon coast for oil is negligible compared to the major threat drilling would pose to Oregon's coastal communities and jobs.”

HB 3613 extends the prohibition on leasing land in the Territorial Sea for purposes of exploration, development or production of oil, gas or sulfur. The “Territorial Sea” is defined as the waters and seabed extending three geographical miles seaward in conformance with federal law.

HB 3613 was sponsored by Representative Ben Cannon (D-Portland) in the House. The bill will now go to the Governor's desk for his approval.

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