

May 13, 2019

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta
212 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R. 310, West Coast Ocean Protection Act – SUPPORT

Dear Congressman Panetta:

I am writing today on behalf of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors to express our support for the West Coast Ocean Protection Act (H.R. 310).

The West Coast Ocean Protection Act would permanently protect the California, Oregon, and Washington coasts by amending the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to prohibit new oil or natural gas leases in each state's outer continental shelves and permanently protect the \$44 billion coastal economies of the three states, which support nearly 650,000 jobs. As you know, the Trump Administration has proposed to open all federal U.S. waters, including 90 percent of the nation's Outer Continental Shelf, for potential oil and gas exploration and development. The draft plan recommends two offshore oil and gas lease sales near the central coast of California.

Last year, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a resolution that strongly supports the existing ban on new oil and gas drilling in federal waters offshore California and opposes federal efforts to modify the ban. The County continues to believe that new oil and gas development offshore presents a significant risk to our coastal economy and the extraordinary natural resources protected by the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

We are pleased to offer our support for the West Coast Ocean Protection Act, and we thank you for your leadership on this important issue facing Monterey County and other communities across the nation.

Sincerely,

John M. Phillips
Chair, Board of Supervisors