



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Coalition of Attorneys General Submit Comments Opposing Rollback of Safety Protections for Offshore Oil and Gas Production *Department of Interior Set to Weaken Safety Regulations Implemented in the Wake of Deepwater Horizon Explosion***

**BALTIMORE, MD (January 30, 2018)** – Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh led a group of Attorneys General in submitting [comments](#) to the Department of Interior’s Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), opposing proposed weakening of the agency’s regulations governing safety systems for offshore oil and gas production. The purpose of the regulations, updated and implemented in 2016 after the Deepwater Horizon explosion and spill, was to reduce the environmental and safety risks associated with offshore drilling.

“The Deepwater Horizon oil explosion caused substantial and lasting harm to the environment,” said Attorney General Frosh. “But the lives lost are the most tragic and permanent result of that incident. Rolling back safety protections less than two years after implementation is wrong and jeopardizes human and environmental safety.”

The 2016 regulatory revisions took effect on November 7, 2016. When BSEE issued those revisions, it noted that changes were “necessary to improve human safety, environmental protection, and regulatory oversight of critical equipment involving production safety systems,” and were “intended to improve worker safety and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems by helping to reduce the number of production-related incidents resulting in oil spills, injuries, and fatalities.” Scarcely a year later, at the same time the Department is proposing expanding offshore drilling operations, BSEE has proposed another significant overhaul of the production safety systems regulations.

In addition to Maryland, the comments were also supported by Attorneys General from Maine, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, and Virginia.