



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh Urges DOI to Abandon Offshore Drilling Plan

BALTIMORE, MD (February 1, 2018) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh joined a coalition of 12 Attorneys General in requesting U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke terminate the Trump Administration’s plan to allow offshore drilling off the coast of Maryland and multiple Atlantic Coast states.

In a [letter](#) to Secretary Zinke, the Attorneys General state the program would, “create multiple problems for nearly everyone who participates in or benefits from our states’ coastal and maritime economies. At a minimum, three million jobs across America depend on the ocean and coastal economy, which generated more than \$350 billion in gross domestic prosperity of our states. It also endangers the unique ecologies of our shores and state ocean waters.”

“The risks associated with offshore drilling are unacceptable,” said Attorney General Frosh. “Environmental disasters in the Gulf of Mexico and around the country serve as stark reminders of the permanent damage due to offshore drilling. We will fight every step of the way to protect the natural habitats, the economy and tourism that are directly tied to our shores and the Chesapeake Bay.”

Maryland’s coastal and marine resources are extensive. Maryland is home to a portion of the Assateague Island National Seashore, one of the few remaining undeveloped barrier island environments along the mid-Atlantic coast. Just to the north, tourism supports more than 10,000 jobs in Ocean City and its 10-mile beachfront. Maryland’s Chesapeake Bay and Eastern Shore also are the foundation for commercial and recreational fishing and seafood industries that support nearly 20,000 jobs. The Bay serves as nursery grounds for hundreds of species that spend part of their lives in the Atlantic, including striped bass, flounder, and crabs. Additionally, Maryland’s coastline provides critical resting and foraging habitat for birds migrating along the Atlantic Flyway.

Not only does this plan put at risk jobs and our environment, it also demonstrates disregard for the voices of the people of Maryland. State and local governments, as well as private citizens in Maryland, have made their opposition to this plan clear via the Department of Interior’s commenting process. Meanwhile, the State of Florida has apparently received a carve-out from this plan, via Twitter.

In addition to Maryland, Attorneys General signing today's letter include California, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Massachusetts, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Virginia.