

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. 42 was approved as
Minute Item No. 42 by the California State Lands
Commission by a vote of 2 to 0 at its
10-20-05 meeting.

Minute Item
42

10/20/05

P. Thayer

CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

Regular Item 42: The Executive Officer presented a resolution to the Commission for adoption concerning the lifting of an ongoing federal offshore oil and gas leasing moratorium. The item was approved by a 2-0 vote.

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CALENDAR ITEM

42

10/20/05
P. Thayer

**CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION
RESOLUTION**

**RESOLUTION WILL BE HEARD AT THE COMMISSION
MEETING**

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**RESOLUTION BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS
COMMISSION REQUESTING CONGRESS AND THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE THE CALIFORNIA OIL AND
GAS LEASING MORATORIUM**

WHEREAS, The citizens of California oppose new oil and gas drilling off their coastline and support protecting their fragile and valuable coastal environment over development of the relatively small amounts of oil and gas offshore California; and

WHEREAS, California first took steps to protect its coast from oil and gas development when the California Legislature in 1955, and again in 1963, prohibited oil and gas leasing in the State waters off Monterey and Santa Cruz counties and portions of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Humboldt, and Mendocino Counties; and

WHEREAS, The California State Lands Commission later filled in large geographic gaps in the State sanctuary statutes by administratively establishing a sanctuary to prohibit new oil and gas leasing in all State coastal waters; and

WHEREAS, The California State Lands Commission has not issued a single offshore oil and gas lease for new areas since the 1969 blowout of a well in Federal waters off Santa Barbara that spilled 3.2 million gallons of crude oil fouling Santa Barbara County's ocean beaches and devastating local tourism; and

WHEREAS, The California Legislature continued the State's efforts to restrict oil and gas development in its own waters by enacting the California Coastal Sanctuary Act in 1994, which incorporated the administrative sanctuary previously established by the California State Lands Commission and created a statutory statewide coastal sanctuary that prohibits future oil and gas leasing in all State coastal waters, from Mexico to the Oregon border, in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, The Commission adopted on August 19, 2003 a resolution "Opposing a Federal Inventory of Offshore Oil and Gas Resources" as proposed in the Federal Energy Policy Act of 2003, because such an inventory could lead to a lifting of the oil and gas moratorium, and the Commission adopted on April 26, 2005 a resolution requesting Congress to continue the Federal offshore oil and gas leasing moratorium; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Congress has protected California coastline from expanded offshore drilling for more than twenty years, renewing this protection in the form of a legislative moratorium contained in the annual appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior; and

WHEREAS, The Federal government has taken steps in the past to protect California from oil development in Federal waters, for example, in 1990, the Department of Interior cancelled Federal Oil and Gas Lease Sales Nos. 91, 95 and 119 which would have threatened more than 9.9 million acres of offshore Federal lands with oil development and increasing the likelihood of oil spills and degradation of California's ocean environment; and

WHEREAS, The need for new oil development can be reduced by improving automobile fuel efficiency and energy efficiency, researching renewable energy and alternative fuels, and fully funding energy conservation and efficiency programs, including solar and renewables, weatherization, and other initiatives; thus increasing energy independence and reducing the reliance on foreign oil; and

WHEREAS, President Bush's FY 2006 Budget supports a continuation of the congressional offshore leasing moratorium; and

WHEREAS, In spite of the California and Federal policies to prevent new offshore oil and gas leasing, the House Resources Committee adopted a post-hurricane Katrina energy bill on September 28, 2005, the National Energy Supply Diversification and Disruption Prevention Act, that includes an amendment offered by Representatives John Peterson (R-PA) and Neil Abercombie (D-Hawaii) lifting the offshore ban for natural gas drilling and modifying provisions that would allow states to "opt out" of offshore oil and gas leasing; and

WHEREAS, the Department of the Interior issued a Notice calling for comments on a new, 2007-2012 OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program that includes consideration of the areas subject to the federal OCS leasing moratorium, now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the California State Lands Commission that it urges the President and the Congress of the United States to maintain the existing Federal oil and gas leasing moratorium and reject any attempt to weaken this moratorium, whether in the post-hurricane Katrina energy package, the budget reconciliation bill, the 5-year Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program or any other vehicle; and be it further

Resolved, That the Congress of the United States and the Federal government be encouraged to explore options to increase energy independence and reduce reliance on foreign oil, such as incentives to improve energy efficiency, requirements to improve automobile fuel efficiency, provide funding for research into renewable energy and alternative fuels, and fully funding energy conservation and efficiency; and be it further

Resolved, That the Commission's Executive Officer transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Governor of California, to the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, to the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, to the Chairs and Ranking Minority Members of the House Committee on Resources, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

To be considered by the California State Lands Commission on October 20, 2005.

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