SR-35 (2017-2018)

ENROLLED MAY 05, 2017

PASSED IN SENATE MAY 04, 2017

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2017–2018 REGULAR SESSION

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 35

Introduced by Senators Jackson, De León, Allen, Atkins, Beall, Bradford, Dodd, Glazer, Hertzberg, Hill, Hueso, Lara, McGuire, Mendoza, Mitchell, Monning, Newman, Pan, Portantino, Skinner, Stern, Wieckowski, Wiener, and Wilk

May 01, 2017

Relative to new Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas leasing in federal waters offshore California

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SR 35, Jackson.

WHEREAS, California's iconic coastal and marine waters are one of our state's most precious resources, and as elected officials, it is our duty to ensure the long-term viability of California's fish and wildlife resources, and thriving fishing, tourism, and recreation sectors; and

WHEREAS, Hundreds of millions of California residents and visitors enjoy the state's ocean and coast for recreation, exploration, and relaxation; and tourism and recreation comprise the largest sector of the state's $445 billion ocean economy; and

WHEREAS, There has been no new offshore oil and gas lease in California since the 1969 blowout of a well in federal waters; and

WHEREAS, Beginning in 1921, and many times since, the California Legislature has enacted laws that withdrew certain offshore areas from oil and gas leasing, and by 1989, the state's offshore oil and gas leasing moratorium was in place; and

WHEREAS, In 1994, the California Legislature made findings in Assembly Bill 2444, Chapter 970 of the Statutes of 1994, that offshore oil and gas production in certain areas of state waters poses an unacceptably high risk of damage and disruption to the marine environment; and

WHEREAS, In the same bill, the Legislature created the California Coastal Sanctuary Act, which included all of the state's unleased waters subject to tidal influence and prohibited new oil and gas leases in the sanctuary, unless the President of the United States has found a severe energy supply interruption and has ordered distribution of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, the Governor finds that the energy resources of the sanctuary will contribute significantly to alleviating that interruption, and the Legislature subsequently amends Chapter 970 of the Statutes of 1994 to allow that extraction; and

WHEREAS, Section 18 of the federal Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.) requires the preparation of a nationwide offshore oil and gas leasing program setting a five-year schedule of lease sales implemented by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management within the United States Department of the Interior; and

WHEREAS, Consistent with the principles of Section 18 and the resulting regionally tailored leasing strategy, the current exclusion of the Pacific Outer Continental Shelf from new oil and gas development is consistent with the long-standing interests of Pacific Coast states, as framed in the 2006 Agreement on Ocean Health adopted by the Governors of California, Washington, and Oregon; and

WHEREAS, In November 2016, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management released a final 2017–2022 leasing program that continues the moratorium on oil and gas leasing in the undeveloped areas of the Pacific Outer Continental Shelf; and

WHEREAS, Governor Brown, in December 2016, requested that then President Obama permanently withdraw California's Outer Continental Shelf from new oil and gas leasing, and along with previous California governors, has united with the Governors of Oregon and Washington in an effort to commit to developing robust renewable energy sources to reduce our dependence on fossil fuel and help us reach our carbon emission goals; and

WHEREAS, The California Legislature has led the nation with its landmark climate change legislation, requiring ambitious greenhouse gas emission reductions of a 40 percent emissions reduction below 1990 levels by 2030, and achieving a renewables portfolio standard of 50 percent by 2030; California must lead the nation in fostering the transition away from offshore fossil fuel production to protect both our climate and oceans from the damaging impacts of climate change, which will affect all life on earth for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, There are renewed calls for opening offshore areas for drilling and for lifting moratoriums on energy production in federal areas, which could lead to more oil spills and increased dependence of fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, The California Legislature considers new oil and gas development offshore of California to be a threat to the nation's economy, national security, and state's ambitious renewable energy goals; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate strongly and unequivocally supports the current federal prohibition on new oil or gas drilling in federal waters offshore California, opposes attempts to modify the prohibition, and will consider any appropriate actions to maintain the prohibition; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate 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 each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, to the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, to the Director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and to each member of the California State Senate and Assembly.