

## RESOLUTION 10-06

**CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH  
ST. JOHNS COUNTY  
FLORIDA**

**RE: OPPOSING THE APPROVAL OF  
OIL DRILLING IN FLORIDA'S WATERS  
IN AREAS OTHER THAN THOSE  
ALREADY APPROVED FOR OIL  
LEASING AND OIL EXPLORATION  
AND SUPPORTING THE SEARCH FOR  
ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES,  
PROTECTING FLORIDA'S TOURISM  
INDUSTRY, AND PRESERVING  
FLORIDA'S BEACHES**

**WHEREAS**, Florida's economy depends on its multi-billion dollar tourism industry, which resulted in more than 82 million visitors coming to Florida in 2008, during which period tourism generated over \$4.0 billion in taxable sales; and

**WHEREAS**, tourism accounts for one-third of Florida's budget revenue, and 96% of those visitors cite the beaches as an influential factor in their decision to visit Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, tax revenues generated from Florida's growing tourism industry are critical to continued funding of essential governmental services, including transportation, schools, and public safety; and

**WHEREAS**, oil rigs and the pipelines that support them, including their required setback areas, severely limit access to the scarce sand sources that are vital for Florida's beach renourishment program; and

**WHEREAS**, a 2007 report by the U.S. Department of Energy shows that opening the Florida coast to drilling as close as three miles would not have a significant impact on domestic crude oil prices before 2010, if ever; that it is not economically feasible to drill for oil in certain offshore areas; and even if all available areas were opened, at the peak of production, it would have little, if any, effect on price; and

**WHEREAS**, nearly 80 per cent of estimated U.S. oil reserves are already currently available to exploration and more than 68 million acres are available to drill, and the U.S. is the third largest oil producer at over 7 million barrels of oil per day; and

**WHEREAS**, the area with the potential for the greatest risk of environmental damage is the eastern part of the Gulf of Mexico, three miles off the western coast of Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, environmental specialist contend the major risk from drilling platforms is the wastewater they routinely discharge, which contains drilling fluids and heavy metals including mercury; and

**WHEREAS**, according to oil industry data, an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico can dump up to 90,000 tons of drilling fluid and metal cuttings over its lifetime. These contaminants accumulate in the marine food web and may contaminate local beaches and have a negative effect on the environment and the tourism industry; and

**WHEREAS**, near shore drilling creates an environmental threat to marine mammals whereby mechanical sounds carry through the water for hundreds of miles and have been

known to cause permanent hearing loss and also disrupts their feeding, migration, social bonding, and have been associated with stranded whales; and

**WHEREAS**, it is our belief that despite technological advances in oil drilling technology, there is no positive assurance that catastrophic damage to our coastline, beaches, plant and fish life could be avoided during normal operating conditions or during storm situations; and

**WHEREAS**, there is no assurance that oil companies will not become more interested in developing the near shore Atlantic coast; and

**WHEREAS**, lifting the moratorium on mineral leasing in the Gulf of Mexico poses an intolerable threat to the beaches, waterways, and economy of Florida;

**WHEREAS**, the City Commission of the City of St Augustine Beach supports further development of non-fossil fuel energy sources, such as solar and wind energy, etc.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Commission of the City of St. Augustine Beach, St. Johns County, Florida, that we strongly encourage all elected officials at the County, State and Federal levels to oppose legislative attempts to allow near shore oil drilling expansion past the areas already approved for pre-leasing, leasing, and oil production activities and to take immediate steps to encourage and assist in the development of alternative sources of energy.

**RESOLVED AND DONE**, this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of May, 2010, by the City Commission of the City of St. Augustine Beach, St. Johns County, Florida.

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Mayor – Commissioner

ATTEST:

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City Manager