

Statements in celebration of President Biden's historic action on January 6, 2025 to protect our ocean and coasts from offshore drilling:

"We are grateful President Biden has taken action to protect the eastern Gulf of Mexico, preserving this vital region from the harms of drilling. This decision reflects the strong opposition of Floridians and others to industrializing and polluting our waters. Still, much remains to be done to shield the entire Gulf from offshore drilling and bring about a just transition to clean energy," said Martha Collins, Healthy Gulf Executive Director.

"We applaud President Biden for using his authority under Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) to permanently protect more than 625 million acres of federal waters from fossil fuel development," said Marce Gutiérrez-Graudiņš, Founder and Executive Director of Azul. "Offshore drilling poses significant risks to coastal communities, public health, and ecosystems while expanding fossil fuel extraction undermines climate goals. The 2024 National Azul poll found that across political ideologies, Latino voters support action to ban offshore drilling and are even willing to pay more out of pocket to make it happen. This overwhelming public support provides an opportunity for incoming administrations to continue strengthening these provisions. The urgent need to mitigate climate change transcends political leadership. We thank President Biden for taking this significant and bold step to protect our ocean and solidify his climate legacy."

"It was welcome news over four years ago when President Trump announced a 10-year moratorium on drilling off the southern coastal states of Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina and as welcome as that news was then we also knew it wasn't enough," said Sandra Bundy, President of the Business Alliance for Protecting the Atlantic Coast. "The Business Alliance for Protecting the Atlantic Coast has always had our sights set on permanent protection of the eastern seaboard, where coastal businesses and tourism-based economies remained at risk. We are thrilled and thankful to learn this goal is going to be realized. Opening all federal waters to offshore exploration and drilling posed serious threats to coastal economies and ecosystems that are critical to millions along the coast. Cities and towns large and small oppose the industrialization of the Atlantic and are increasingly seeing stronger storms and flooding and face serious threats from rising sea levels. Those threats would increase in magnitude if offshore drilling was added to the mix. President Biden is leaving us all with a legacy of protecting the Atlantic coast for generations to come. This would not have been possible without years of dedicated efforts from business, fishing communities and countless others who used their voices to garner bipartisan support from Governors and Legislators in coastal states and beyond."

"The Pacific west coast economy provides over \$80 Billion in GDP via industries like tourism, outdoor recreation, fishing, retail, and real estate, supporting more than 825,000 jobs. And BAPPC's 8,100 business members rely on a clean ocean to drive their revenues and provide for their customers, employees and families. We applaud the Biden administration for using their authority via the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act and protecting our businesses by prioritizing

*a healthy coastal ecosystem,” said **Grant Bixby, Founding Member of the Business Alliance for Protecting the Pacific Coast.***

*“Surfrider Foundation applauds the Biden administration for withdrawing these waters from future oil and gas leasing. Offshore drilling is a dirty and damaging practice that harms our environment, communities, and businesses, while worsening climate change. The President’s historic action is a key step towards ending oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters. We call on our federal leaders to take further steps to ensure that all U.S. coasts are protected from this harmful industry,” said **Dr. Chad Nelsen, CEO of the Surfrider Foundation.***

*“The Surf Industry Members Association applauds the federal administration for permanently protecting the Atlantic, Pacific, Eastern Gulf, and Bering Sea from new offshore oil drilling. Our businesses and entire industry rely on and profit from clean beaches and safe ocean waters for surfing, diving, fishing, boating and other outdoor activities,” said **Vipe Desai, Executive Director of the Surf Industry Members Association.***

*“This is one of the most important steps that can be taken to protect our ocean and our coastal communities,” said **Monterey Bay Aquarium Executive Director Julie Packard.** “We have learned devastating lessons from the impacts of offshore oil development off of California, in the Gulf, and elsewhere. We know that the foundation of thriving coastal communities and their economies is a healthy, vibrant ocean. Thanks to this decisive action, these communities no longer need to bear the threat of offshore drilling.”*

“We’re grateful to President Biden and Vice President Harris,” Packard continued. “Their action will unlock a better future for coastal communities and economies, tourism, sustainable fisheries, and wildlife. This will benefit Americans, and our ocean, for decades to come.”

*“President Biden made the most of a historic opportunity to build on the legacy of former Democratic and Republican presidents who protected our coasts from new offshore drilling,” said **Oceana Campaign Director Joseph Gordon.** “Protecting new areas from disastrous oil spills is not only good for our oceans, but also those that rely on clean and healthy coasts. Our coastlines are home to millions of Americans and support billions of dollars of economic activity that depend on a healthy coast, abundant wildlife, and thriving fisheries. New coastal protections build on a bipartisan tradition, including President Trump’s previous withdrawals in the southeastern United States in 2020. Presidents of both parties understand that part of what makes America great are our treasured coastal communities, and we must safeguard our coasts for future generations.”*

“The Biden administration is answering the call to protect the ocean and the people living along its coast from the dangers of offshore drilling. We applaud this decision to safeguard the coastal communities and economies of the East Coast, Eastern Gulf of Mexico, West Coast, and Alaska, putting people ahead of the whims of special interests. Shoreline communities deserve to live free from the specter of oil spills and air pollution and this action accomplishes that mission for millions of Americans. From subsistence communities, to a healthy fishing economy

and a booming tourism industry, this decision supports more prosperous coastlines and a greener future for all Americans,” **Jenny Rowland-Shea, Director for Public Lands at Center for American Progress.**

“The Biden administration has made a timely decision to protect public waters, in line with the demands of Americans — especially those living along our coasts,” **said Sierra Weaver, Senior Attorney for Defenders of Wildlife.** “This decision protects endangered species, seafood resources, and so much more aquatic life, rather than offering up our natural heritage to corporate interests. It’s not only a smart choice, but the clear choice.”

“This critical action is a major win for coastal communities, marine wildlife, and our collective future,” **said Sierra Club Executive Director Ben Jealous.** “In using the power of the presidency, the same authority used by his three immediate predecessors, President Biden is acting to safeguard the public health of coastal communities from the dangers of offshore drilling along with the marine wildlife that live in these waters. There will never be a safe way to desecrate our waters. As long as it is allowed to continue, offshore drilling and the pollution it causes will continue to present a threat to coastal communities, economies, and environments. We must continue to work to achieve a clean energy transition that ends our reliance on fossil fuels, grows the strong economy it has already built with family-sustaining jobs and preserves our clean water and clean air. The Sierra Club applauds President Biden for his leadership and further cementing his historic legacy of prioritizing our health, our collective future, and public lands and waters.”

“President Biden just made a powerful investment in the resiliency of communities, regional economies, and marine wildlife across the coastal United States,” **said Earthjustice Vice President of Litigation for Lands, Wildlife, and Oceans Drew Caputo.** “These protective policies will ensure safer conditions and more room for prosperity for millions of people living along American coasts, for thousands of businesses that rely on undisturbed oceans, and for vulnerable wildlife. Our work ahead is clear: we’ll continue the fight to ensure that Gulf communities in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama can also increasingly live without the threat from offshore drilling on their front doorstep.”

“Aquariums across the country applaud President Biden’s historic action to protect nearly a quarter of U.S. waters from offshore oil and gas drilling,” **said Kim McIntyre, Executive Director of the Aquarium Conservation Partnership.** “Our coastal communities, economic future, and national heritage depend on clean, vibrant, and healthy coastlines and ocean ecosystems. ACP members are proud to showcase the living treasures of our nation’s ocean and coast in our aquariums, and to inspire stewardship of these irreplaceable national assets.”

“Aquarium Conservation Partnership (ACP) members work with communities they are located in on critical matters that impact our lands, waterways, freshwater ecosystems, and ocean,” **said Ayana Melvan, Senior Director of Conservation Action for Aquarium Conservation Partnership.** “The work takes all of us,” Melvan continued. “President Biden’s action to protect

our waters from offshore oil and gas drilling supports our collective movement toward Environmental and Ocean Justice."

*"President Biden has continued a strong bipartisan tradition to protect our coasts with decisive action to stop new offshore drilling in areas of our ocean," said **Sarah Guy, Executive Director of Ocean Defense Initiative**. "These protections help the coastal communities, economies, and marine life that depend on a healthy ocean to thrive. We thank the Administration for this action and commit to working toward a future where every coast nationwide is free from the risks and negative impacts of offshore drilling, reaping the benefits of a healthy ocean for generations to come."*

*"Done in response to bipartisan support, actions like this have been successfully used by presidents of both parties to protect the use of essential U.S. military facilities or to preserve sustainable local coastal economies," said **Richard Charter, Senior Fellow with The Ocean Foundation**. "We applaud today's visionary step to prevent the next Deepwater Horizon."*

*"The Next 100 Coalition applauds this historic decision from President Biden to prevent oil and gas drilling across over 600 million acres of federal waters. This effort will help to prevent harmful drilling and the further degradation of ecosystems that are crucial to preserve marine life, cultural practices, the livelihoods, and food security. This is one of many decisions that will add to President Biden's legacy to protecting the environment," said **Karyn Bigelow, Director of Programs & Advocacy with the Next 100 Coalition**.*

*"Today's withdrawals show that President Biden and his administration are listening to the wishes of communities around the country who want to protect their citizens, coasts, and economies from the destructive legacy of offshore oil and gas drilling and spilling", said **Sarah Winter Whelan, Executive Director of the Healthy Ocean Coalition**. "As a coalition of over 300 diverse community groups and citizens, we applaud today's action by President Biden to solidify long term protections for both communities and vital marine ecosystems."*

*"For much too long, our coastal communities have suffered economic and ecological damage from oil spills, and endured devastating hurricanes, sea level rise, and coastal erosion due to climate change caused by fossil fuel pollution. The Biden administration's sweeping decision to protect our nation's waters from future drilling is an unambiguous win for coastal communities, their economies and ecosystems. The decision bolsters our national security and will ultimately reduce the climate pollution that is ravaging the coasts, the nation, and the world," said **Margie Alt, Director of the Climate Action Campaign**. "President Biden has been a steadfast champion for climate progress from Day One of his administration. His legacy of conservation and advocacy to protect our climate will leave an indelible mark on the health of our communities and our environment."*

*"The waters off our coasts are sacred places - sites of Indigenous wisdom, ecological abundance, and spiritual connection. President Biden's protection of over 625 million acres from offshore drilling honors this sacredness while advancing environmental justice," said **Avery Davis Lamb, Executive Director of Creation Justice Ministries**. "Like the waters of baptism*

that sustain and renew us, healthy oceans sustain coastal communities and marine ecosystems. This decision reflects a moral commitment to protecting both vulnerable communities and God's creation. At Creation Justice Ministries, we see this as a vital step toward climate justice, ecological flourishing, and healed relationships with all of creation."

*"We applaud the Biden administration's bold decision to safeguard over 625 million acres of public waters from offshore oil and gas drilling. This action preserves our precious marine ecosystems and ensures that future generations of Latinos and all Americans can continue to rely on these waters for their livelihoods, culture, and way of life." **Carlos Zegarra, Executive Director Sachamama***