



Overview

With rollbacks to offshore drilling protections and the proposal to open up more coastline to leases, states are more energized than ever. After Secretary Zinke announced his intention to increase offshore drilling, over [225 state legislators](#) signed a letter opposing this threat on coastal states' environment and economies. This leasing program would open a majority of the United States Outer Continental Shelf to oil and gas exploration and construction. It would also represent the first time in decades that many states' coasts would be exposed to such development and potential harm.



In response, states are looking to protect their coasts against offshore drilling against this and all future threats. By passing resolutions, restrictions, and liability laws, states are taking bold steps to stop offshore drilling.

Legislation

Numerous states have introduced strong bills in the form of resolutions, restrictions, and liability and penalties to help prevent offshore drilling. Some examples include:



Resolutions

A common state response to offshore drilling expansion has been adopting resolutions memorializing their opposition to the policy. These resolutions are usually directed to the President, Congress, and the Department of the Interior, and ask for either an exclusion from the drilling policy or for an indefinite extension of the previous offshore drilling moratorium. Examples of these resolutions include Georgia ([HR48](#)), New Hampshire ([HJR2](#)), California ([AJR 19](#)), and Delaware ([SS 1](#)).



Restrictions

Some states have taken to pushing for restrictions on oil and gas drilling, exploration, and transportation activities within waters regulated by the state, usually up to 3 miles offshore. Examples include Hawaii ([SB259](#)), Massachusetts ([SD2204](#)), New Hampshire ([SB76](#)), New York ([A 2572](#)), Oregon ([SB256](#)), South Carolina ([HB3087](#)), New Jersey ([A 839](#)), and Delaware ([SB 200](#)).



Liability and Penalties

Aside from prohibitions on offshore drilling and exploration activities, another option has been to establish stricter enforcement of liability and penalties on entities that cause spills, or other damages, from offshore drilling activities. Maryland ([HB 1456](#)) passed a strict liability law in 2018 and established offshore drilling as "ultrahazardous and abnormally dangerous."