

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 3

Introduced by Assembly Member Nava

January 23, 2009

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 3—Relative to offshore oil drilling.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AJR 3, as introduced, Nava. Offshore oil drilling.

This measure would request that the Congress of the United States reinstate the federal offshore oil and gas leasing moratorium for the 2009 fiscal year and beyond. This measure would also memorialize the Legislature’s opposition to the proposed expansion of oil and gas drilling off the Pacific Coast and any federal energy policies and legislation that would weaken California’s role in energy siting decisions by those policies.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The United States Department of the Interior, acting
2 in President Bush’s final days in office, on January 16, 2009,
3 proposed opening up 130 million acres off of California’s coast
4 to drilling for oil and natural gas; and
5 WHEREAS, Proposed drilling areas include areas off Humboldt
6 and Mendocino Counties and from San Luis Obispo south to San
7 Diego; and
8 WHEREAS, Following the infamous January 29, 1969, oil spill
9 that resulted in the spillage of 3,200,000 gallons of crude oil and
10 that fouled Santa Barbara County’s ocean beaches, Californians
11 became even more wary about offshore oil drilling, continuing

1 with the passage of additional oil and gas leasing prohibitions in
2 1969, 1970, and 1971; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1994, the California Coastal Sanctuary Act of
4 1994 (Chapter 3.4 (commencing with Section 6240) of Part 1 of
5 Division 6 of the Public Resources Code) became law, creating a
6 comprehensive statewide coastal sanctuary that prohibits, in
7 perpetuity, future oil and gas leasing in state waters, from Mexico
8 to the Oregon border, and that adds leases to the sanctuary as they
9 are quitclaimed to the state; and

10 WHEREAS, In addition, the protection of California's
11 spectacular 1,100 mile coastline is of the utmost importance to a
12 number of our state's coastal and ocean-dependent industries,
13 including tourism and commercial fishing, which contributed over
14 \$50 billion to California's economy in 2003; and

15 WHEREAS, California's ocean waters are also home to four
16 important sanctuaries, that are, by definition, areas of special
17 conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, cultural,
18 archaeological, scientific, educational, and aesthetic qualities and
19 are particularly sensitive to the impacts of oil development; and

20 WHEREAS, Additional offshore oil leasing and production
21 would degrade the quality of our air and water and adversely impact
22 our marine resources, including seismic surveys that could severely
23 impact marine mammals, including threatened and endangered
24 species such as the blue and humpback whale; and

25 WHEREAS, Offshore oil development poses a serious risk of
26 oil spills, especially with the introduction of deepwater drilling
27 technologies and floating oil storage and processing vessels,
28 thereby threatening marine ecosystems, and could have devastating
29 effects on the southern sea otter, listed as a threatened species since
30 1997, as well as onshore wildlife, birds, and their habitats in the
31 ocean, in estuaries, and on beaches; and

32 WHEREAS, Offshore oil development also leads to the
33 industrialization of the shoreline, creating land use conflicts,
34 visually degrading coastal areas, and posing potentially
35 life-threatening public safety risks; and

36 WHEREAS, The further development of nonrenewable resources
37 that degrade our air, water, and land is contrary to our state's goals
38 of reducing emissions that cause global warming, improving air
39 quality, and increasing the use of renewable energy; now, therefore,
40 be it

1 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
2 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature of the State of California
3 respectfully requests that the Congress of the United States reinstate
4 the federal offshore oil and gas leasing moratorium for the 2009
5 fiscal year and beyond; and be it further

6 *Resolved,* That the Legislature of the State of California
7 respectfully opposes the proposed expansion of oil and gas drilling
8 off the Pacific Coast and any federal energy policies and legislation
9 that would weaken California's legitimate role in energy siting
10 decisions due to the threat posed by those policies and legislation
11 to the integrity of California's coastal and ocean dependent tourism
12 and fishing economies and the consolidation of project review
13 authority with the federal government; and be it further

14 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
15 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
16 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to each
17 Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the
18 United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.