

## **SAMPLE OFFSHORE DRILLING LETTER TO THE EDITOR TALKING POINTS:**

**Use your own words, your own stories, and your own voice to weave some version of these facts and points into your letter.**

- Florida's economy is based in a clean healthy environment and clean beaches. Florida's tourist economy brings billions of dollars into Florida and is too important to risk in terms of offshore drilling.
- Florida is the recreational fishing capitol of the United States. It defines the Florida experience, and pollution from rigs can hurt spawning grounds and potentially pollute our estuaries and wetlands that are essential to healthy fish populations
- Florida's commercial fishing industry is already in trouble and facing hard times as a result of the recession. Offshore drilling creates navigational hazards, pollutes fishing grounds, and can put an already hurting industry deeper in the hole.
- Offshore drilling is a dangerous and dirty industry. While the industry uses better technology now that it did 30 years ago, human error and mechanical error still happen. Just the routine pollution from offshore drilling is tremendous and introduces hazardous chemicals into the Gulf, as well as hurting fish and wildlife.
- Other Gulf states that have large offshore drilling industries have faced polluted beaches and shorelines, wetlands loss, tarballs, and a dependence on the boom and bust energy economy.
- People come to Florida for the fishing and the beaches. People will not come here to see oil rigs off the coast.
- Drilling in Florida's waters means rigs just 3-9 miles from shore.
- A new, clean energy future for America should be based on reducing climate change and renewable and alternative energy. More fossil fuels are not part of the answer.
- We will never drill our way to energy independence. As long as we are dependent on fossil fuels as a nation, we will be dependent on foreign sources of oil. Being independent of fossil fuels is the only true path to energy independence.
- If drilling does occur off the coast of Florida there will be significant onshore infrastructure that will come with it. This will include refineries, pipelines, tankers, storage tanks, etc. All of these types of facilities and equipment carries risks of spills and routine pollution. A tour of the coastlines of drilling states in the Gulf would provide a look into what Florida's coasts could look like.

**Here's a sample letter to the editor to get you going!**

Dear Editor,

Florida's economy, imperiled and fragile as it is, is directly dependant on tourism. Florida's tourism industry relies heavily on the idea that Florida has clean beaches and lots of recreational fish to catch. Sunsets, charter boats, beach bars, and white sand blending with turquoise waters are the life blood of the Florida Dream. Florida's economy, particularly since the development industry is in shambles, has never been more dependent on the nation's and world's tourists coming to spend money and support local businesses. Offshore oil and gas drilling, and the infrastructure to move and process product, is a direct threat to Florida's economy, as well as the coastal environments that define Florida.

Florida's environment, economy, and military training infrastructure all would be threatened by drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico. As our country moves towards energy policy that stresses renewables, alternatives, and efficiency in an effort both to address climate change and be less dependent on fossil fuels it would be a monumental step backwards to open up more of the Gulf of Mexico to offshore drilling. The Gulf and its natural resources and coastal communities have suffered enough from oil and gas drilling. Let's quit digging the hole deeper and find real solutions.

Sincerely,  
John/Jane Q Public  
Address/Phone/Email