

November 5, 2014

Donald van der Vaart
Deputy Secretary and Energy Policy Advisor
North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
217 West Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Mr. van der Vaart:

This letter is in response to your October 31, 2014 communication to the North Carolina conservation community, in which you assert that the November 6, 2014 offshore oil meeting to be hosted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will “include neither special interest groups nor industry representatives.” *See* attached letter to N. Luhr, October 31, 2014.

This representation appears to be in direct conflict with John Murawski’s October 31, 2014 column for the Raleigh News & Observer, “NC government meeting on offshore drilling closed to public, journalists” (attached), in which he reports that “other speakers” at this meeting will include the Center for Offshore Safety, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, and Consumer Energy Alliance. These “other speakers” are, in fact, associations whose memberships are largely constituted of oil and gas industry representatives.

The Center for Offshore Safety describes itself as “an industry sponsored organization” and lists among its membership BP, Chevron, Conoco Phillips, Exxon Mobil, Hess, Shell, and Statoil; drilling contractors like Transocean, which was directly involved in the 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* disaster in the Gulf of Mexico; and service providers including Halliburton. *See* <http://www.centerforoffshoresafety.org>.

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce is “a private business organization” whose Strategic Plan includes securing “a more business-friendly environment.” Membership includes Exxon Mobil, Shell Chemical, Chevron, Southern Oil Exploration, and numerous Mobile area businesses directly affiliated with the oil and gas industry. *See* <http://mobilechamber.com/>.

Last but not least, the Consumer Energy Alliance includes as members Anadarko, BP, the Association of Oil Pipelines, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, Hess Corporation, Independent Petroleum Association of America, International Association of Drilling Contractors, Shell Oil, and the U.S. Oil & Gas Association. The “Latest News” page on its website touts polling that the Alliance conducted to support opening the Atlantic to offshore oil drilling. *See* <http://consumerenergyalliance.org/>.

These organizations reported as participating in the meeting are special interest groups representing the oil and offshore drilling industry. We are aware requests have been made for the invitation list for the meeting, but as far as we know it has not been provided. Please clarify whether these associations or any other members of the oil and gas industry will indeed be participating in the November 6th meeting.

Sincerely,

Kemp Burdette, Executive Director
Cape Fear River Watch

Elizabeth Ouzts, State Director
Environment North Carolina

Brian Buzby, Executive Director
NC Conservation Network

Carrie Clark, Executive Director
NC League of Conservation Voters

Derb S. Carter, Jr., Director, Chapel Hill Office
Southern Environmental Law Center

Julie Mayfield, Executive Director
Western North Carolina Alliance

cc: Secretary Sally Jewell, Department of the Interior
Acting Director Walter Cruickshank, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Chief Environmental Officer William Brown, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Jolie Harrison, Permits and Conservation Division, National Marine Fisheries Service
Assistant Secretary for the Environment Mitch Gillespie, NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources