WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

You have the opportunity to reach new audiences, particularly influential thought-leaders, through the printed word. Writing a “Letter to the Editor” of your local paper is an excellent place to start conversations, especially inland, on why opening our coast to offshore drilling will put the entire state at risk. Here are some general tips to keep in mind when crafting your letter to the editor of a local newspaper, magazine, or other relevant publication:

* Keep it short. Most letters to the editor are between less than 250 words (aim for 150 – 200 words total). Stay focused on one topic for each letter.
* Include a way for people to take further action. Whether it’s a specific website to visit, event to attend, or person to contact, do include this information in your letter. You not only want people to learn but you want them to get out of their seats, right?
* Rely on facts. Do your homework and be sure that all of your statements can be traced to credible sources.
* Make your letter timely, especially if you are responding to a recently published article or event. Submit your letter within two days if it is a daily publication and within one week for magazines or weekly publications.
* Personalize the issue. Provide an example of how this issue will make you and/or other members of the community. People need to be able to relate and empathize with you.
* If you submit your letter to a local publication
* Include any credentials you may have. It will add to your credibility. If you are affiliated with a university, business, or specific organization that would carry weight on an environmental issue, include this information (your title as well!)
* Once you select the appropriate newspaper, magazine, or publication to submit your letter to, double-check their requirements for letters, including word length, required information, and how to submit the letter.
* Encourage other community members to submit letters on the same topic. If the newspaper receives an influx on correspondence on the same topic, the chance of one or more of those letters getting published increases!
* Avoid insults, jargon, acronyms, and unnecessary words.

**Example:**

Renewable Energy

I attended two meetings conducted by the Bureau of Offshore Energy Management covering the potential for wind power as well as oil exploration off North Carolina’s coast.

I listened to advocates from both industry and environmental groups, and I concluded that oil drilling is wrong for North Carolina. The environmental risks are awful.  Safer, more viable options are available.

North Carolina has great potential for offshore wind energy. Oil rig leaks occur on a regular basis and the only resolve the industry could say is that they are better than in 2010 when they permanently poisoned the Gulf.

The state is facing environmental attacks on many fronts, from Titan Cement to fracking, to oil drilling and coal ash. These are threats to the air we breathe and water we drink.

Sadly, many of our elected representatives seem blinded to these and have more allegiance to the industry than to their constituents.

I want energy independence as much as anyone, but we should focus on achieving it with renewable energy.

Please use the comment period to contact BOEM and also your elected representatives. Let them know that North Carolina can be a leader in renewable energy and we do not want oil drilling. …

*Andy McGlinn, Wilmington*