**Op-Ed Template: Stop New Offshore Drilling**

**(Note: this template is for business leaders but can be adapted for Surfrider chapter leaders or community leaders.)**

***Headline should be customized for each story.***

**Why I Say No to Oil Drilling off of [STATE/COMMUNITY]’s Coast By [NAME/BUSINESS such as Jane Smith, Owner of Simply Surfboards]**

**As a business owner in [CITY/ STATE] for the past [XX] years, I know that our beautiful beaches and [INSERT SOMETHING ELSE ICONIC ABOUT THE LOCAL COAST] are essential engines of our city’s economy.**

**Every year, thousands of people visit our coast to enjoy our beaches [INSERT ANYTHING ELSE ICONIC/LOCAL], spending millions on hotel visits, dining and supporting businesses like mine. [INSERT LOCAL DATA ON HOW MANY TOURISTS VISIT OR HOW MUCH MONEY THE COASTAL ECONOMY OR TOURISM INDUSTRY GENERATES]. We must do everything we can to preserve our coast, which is why I have joined a growing movement of business and community leaders on the [Pacific/ or Atlantic coast] to urge our federal government to cancel plans for new offshore drilling.**

**The Trump administration recently announced a proposal to expand offshore oil drilling in U.S. waters, threatening ocean recreation, tourism and fishing industries, which provide more than $115 billion in GDP and 2.2 million jobs nationwide. The Draft Proposed Five-Year OCS Offshore Oil and Gas Leasing Plan currently includes planned drilling in the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico and Arctic Ocean. This extreme proposal opens over 90% of the Outer Continental Shelf to new drilling and puts our nation’s coastal communities, beaches, surf breaks, and marine ecosystems at risk of a catastrophic oil spill. This also means that oil rigs could soon sit off our beautiful [IDENTIFY CITY, AREA OR STATE] coastline, threatening our economy and way of life.**

**An oil spill could ruin our economy and environment, but the harm actually occurs way before a spill. Damage to the ocean and wildlife begins when oil companies start seismic blasting to find the best places to drill for oil. The deafening noise created by the seismic airguns can harm whales, dolphins, and sea turtles and drive fish away, hurting our tourism and fishing industries. Seismic blasting is the first step to offshore oil drilling, which means this will soon be permitted right in our backyard.**

**Most people do not like to vacation or swim in the shadow of oil rigs, much less in waters ruined by an oil spill. The industrialization and pollution of our coast from oil development will hurt our economy, driving business away from hotels, restaurants and shops, and jeopardize our fishing industry [ADD/CHANGE DEPENDING ON LOCAL INDUSTRIES].**

**It’s time to come together to protect our community. Bipartisan opposition to offshore oil drilling is growing, but we need more support. To date, over 120 East Coast municipalities, 1,200 elected officials, and an alliance representing 35,000 businesses and 500,000 fishing families have publicly opposed offshore drilling or seismic blasting.**

**Our [CITY COUNCIL/ STATE LEADERS/BUSINESS LEADERS] have spoken out against this threat and are working with leading grassroots organizations like the Surfrider Foundation. We need more voices to join the fight. [INSERT QUOTE OR OTHER STATEMENTS MADE/ACTIONS TAKEN BY LOCAL POLICYMAKERS OR BUSINESS LEADERS.] Stand with us and [INSERT SPECIFIC CALL TO ACTION FOR READERS].**

**We must fight to protect our coastline, economy and way of life from the dangers of offshore drilling. [CITY NAME] has everything to lose and nothing to gain. I for one do not want to see our community impacted by oil and gas development off our coast. I hope you will join us in our opposition to offshore drilling and demand that our president, our governor, and our congressmen do the same [INSERT NAMES OF LOCAL POLITICIANS IF THEY DO NOT YET OPPOSE DRILLING]. We must protect what makes our community special and speak out against offshore drilling. Take action and ask our federal leaders to defend our coasts from new offshore oil drilling and protect our ocean, waves and beaches.**