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April 23, 2009

Representative Gary Aubuchon
Representative Paige Kreegel
Representative Ken Roberson
Representative Nick Thompson
Representative Trudi K. Williams
House Speaker Larry Cretul
House Rules Chair Bill Galvano

Re: HB 1219 Oil Drilling

Honorable Representatives:

This letter is written on behalf of the Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation and its members to express our strong opposition to House Bill 1219 which would open Florida's coastline to drilling for oil and gas.

As your constituents we strongly urge you to oppose this bill and all drilling in the coastal waters off Florida. Our beaches and water quality are our economy. Oil rigs will foul our economy, the serene aesthetic that draws the world to our shores and the sanctuary experience of our coastal region.

Deteriorating water quality in our coastal waters has resulted in the majority of waterbodies in Lee County being declared impaired, shellfish areas being closed to harvesting and decreased productivity of fishing nursery areas. Enough is enough, we must protect our backyard and the precious resources that attract people from around the world.

Florida's elected officials have long fought to protect our coastline in recognition of the devastating impact that just one catastrophic event could have on the state's economy and natural resources. While HB 1219 offers a carrot for funding the Florida Forever program, we are not swayed by this attempt to "green wash" an unacceptable, environmentally destructive proposal.

Bold action is needed today to protect these vital resources. Please oppose HB 1219.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rae Ann Wessel', is written over a white, irregular scribble.

Rae Ann Wessel
SCCF-Natural Resource Policy Director