RESOLUTION NO.

A Resolution of the Board of County Commissioners of Pinellas County,
Florida, Opposing Oil and Gas Drilling in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has included the Eastern Gulf of Mexico in the National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas leasing Program's 2019-2024 Draft Proposed Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Eastern Gulf of Mexico is currently under a leasing moratorium for oil and gas exploration through 2022, and we support making that moratorium permanent; and

WHEREAS, Pinellas County is a peninsula on the central Gulf coast of Florida, and our geography makes us dependent on the health of our waterways; and

WHEREAS, Pinellas County's tourism industry has a total economic impact of over $4.5 billion, and directly supports 47,000 jobs; and

WHEREAS, the Eastern Gulf of Mexico is home to diverse ecosystems that are critical to its onshore, nearshore, and offshore habitats, such as barrier islands, mangroves, wetlands, coral reefs, and oyster beds; and

WHEREAS, the effects of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill are still being felt, even though the spill occurred eight years ago and hundreds of miles away from Florida's coast; and

WHEREAS, drilling in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico would negatively impact the nation's defense capabilities due to impacts on flight training and testing from the numerous bases in the Panhandle, Naval Air Station Key West, and MacDill Air Force Base here in Tampa Bay, which require unrestricted access to the Eastern Gulf of Mexico's waters and airspace.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PINELLAS COUNTY that the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners strongly opposes oil and gas exploration lease sales in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico. Pinellas County urges Congress to make the current moratorium in the Eastern Gulf permanent.

Commissioner _____ offered the foregoing Resolution and moved its adoption, which was seconded by Commissioner _____, and upon roll call the vote was:

AYES:

NAYS:

Absent and not voting: