



Legislation Text

File #: 2010-0398, **Version:** 1

A MOTION related to encouraging early and positive consideration by Congress of measures addressing the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

WHEREAS, open space and recreation lands and facilities are highly valued by residents of King County, for their contribution to the region's quality of life, to the economic vitality of King County and to the wildlife habitat and environmental resource values that are embraced by the region's residents, and

WHEREAS, open space and recreation needs are more critical now than ever before, as the region's cities continue to grow, and as the county's Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the retention of open space lands to help balance more compact development patterns, and

WHEREAS, the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund has been an important source of acquisition funding for open space and recreation facilities, both locally and nationally, and

WHEREAS, the original intent of the Congress in setting up the Land and Water Conservation Fund included the use of fee revenues derived from offshore oil and gas leases to be used for land acquisition for open space and recreation purposes, and

WHEREAS, those revenues were intended to be funded at specified levels, structured as a percentage of lease revenues from offshore oil and gas leases, on an established and continuing basis, and

WHEREAS, funding allocation in recent years has shown a pattern of funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund at substantially less than the amount generated by the oil and gas leasing fee revenue, and

WHEREAS, of that reduced funding, a substantially smaller proportion than originally intended has been directed to state and local governments for open space and recreation purposes, and

WHEREAS, the nation now faces perhaps its greatest environmental disaster in the uncontained oil spill

in the Gulf of Mexico resulting from deepwater oil drilling operations ; and

WHEREAS, it is important now, in this time of heightened attention to the potential impacts of oil and gas drilling activities, to embrace again Congress's original vision of open space acquisition to help offset the effects of oil and gas drilling operations, and

WHEREAS, legislation is currently being developed in Congress that responds to the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, and that could benefit by reemphasis on both a fair allocation of available oil and gas fee revenue amounts among federal, state and local programs, as well as full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

The council hereby encourages early and positive consideration by Congress of measures addressing the Land and Water Conservation Fund, with specific regard to ongoing assurance that revenues made available through the fund are allocated such that federal and state/local portions are balanced, and that neither allocation takes a disproportionate share, and that the full amounts of revenue based on offshore oil and gas leases are directed to the fund, as originally intended by Congress, in support of programs including acquisition of open space and recreation lands and facilities.