

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2011**

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**SENATE BILL 680**

Short Title: Constitutional Convention/Hydrocarbons. (Public)

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Sponsors: Senator Rouzer.

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Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

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April 20, 2011

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT APPLYING TO CONGRESS TO CALL A CONVENTION FOR PROPOSING AN  
2 AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES TO PRESERVE  
3 THE ENERGY SECURITY OF THE COUNTRY BY INCREASING DOMESTIC  
4 HYDROCARBON PRODUCTION BY DIRECTING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT  
5 TO OPEN UP ALL FEDERAL ONSHORE AND OFFSHORE LANDS FOR ENERGY  
6 EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION IF GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DATA INDICATES  
7 THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF ECONOMICALLY RECOVERABLE  
8 HYDROCARBON RESOURCES.  
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10       Whereas, the U.S. Department of Energy reported in December 2010 that 83% of  
11 the nation's current energy supply comes from coal, oil, and natural gas; and

12       Whereas, the National Petroleum Council submitted a report to the U.S. Secretary of  
13 Energy in July 2007 stating, "Coal, oil, and natural gas will remain indispensable to meeting  
14 total projected energy demand growth" in the United States; and

15       Whereas, the U.S. Department of Energy reports that the nation currently imports  
16 51% of its liquid petroleum products; and

17       Whereas, the U.S. Department of the Interior reports that federal onshore lands are  
18 estimated to contain 31 billion barrels of oil and 231 trillion cubic feet of natural gas; and

19       Whereas, the U.S. Department of the Interior reports that 60% of onshore federal  
20 lands that have potential as domestic sources for natural gas and oil are presently closed to  
21 leasing; and

22       Whereas, the Congressional Research Service reports that offshore domestic  
23 resources are estimated to contain 86 billion barrels of oil and 420 trillion cubic feet of natural  
24 gas; and

25       Whereas, with the exception of portions of offshore Alaska, portions of California,  
26 and portions of the Gulf of Mexico, the President of the United States continues to keep the  
27 majority of the nation's offshore waters closed to leasing; and

28       Whereas, in April 2011, the President of the United States linked economic growth  
29 to energy independence and stated that the nation must increase its domestic energy production  
30 and efficiency while concurrently decreasing energy imports; and

31       Whereas, the United States government forecasts rising natural gas consumption,  
32 including a 40% increase in the use of natural gas for electric power generation; and

33       Whereas, Cuba is currently preparing to begin drilling for oil off the island's north  
34 coast, close to Florida and only 50 miles from Key West, as early as the fall of 2011; and

35       Whereas, North Carolina's 60 million acres of federal offshore waters is the largest  
36 along the Atlantic and the fourth-largest in the United States and is currently closed to  
37 exploration by the federal government; and



1           Whereas, North Carolina has had active offshore leases with estimated  
2 economically recoverable natural gas of approximately five trillion cubic feet specific to two  
3 individual lease blocks, each with an area of approximately nine square nautical miles; and

4           Whereas, the North Carolina Legislative Research Commission's Advisory  
5 Committee on Offshore Energy Exploration heard comments and received a report from the  
6 Southeast Energy Alliance that found production of natural gas and associated hydrocarbons  
7 offshore North Carolina would create more than 6,700 new jobs and add more than \$659  
8 million annually to the State's Gross Domestic Product over three decades, during which time  
9 this energy production could generate almost \$10 billion in cost-sharing of government  
10 revenues at an average of \$484 million per year to the State; and

11           Whereas, Article V of the Constitution of the United States provides that upon the  
12 application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the states, Congress shall call a convention for  
13 the purpose of proposing amendments to the Constitution; Now, therefore,

14 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

15           **SECTION 1.** The North Carolina General Assembly applies and makes application  
16 to the Congress of the United States to call a convention pursuant to Article V of the United  
17 States Constitution for the limited purpose of proposing a constitutional amendment to preserve  
18 the energy security of the country by increasing domestic hydrocarbon production by directing  
19 the federal government to open up all federal onshore and offshore lands for energy exploration  
20 and production if geological survey data indicates the possible presence of economically  
21 recoverable hydrocarbon resources.

22           **SECTION 2.** This act is repealed and the application withdrawn, nullified, and  
23 superseded to the same effect as if it had never been passed, and retroactive to the date of  
24 enactment, if it is used for the purpose of calling a convention or used in support of conducting  
25 a convention to amend the Constitution of the United States for any purpose other than  
26 consideration of the amendment proposed in this act other than further amendments that the  
27 North Carolina General Assembly also makes application for.

28           **SECTION 3.** Delegates to such convention, when called, shall be selected  
29 according to procedures established by the legislatures of the several states.

30           **SECTION 4.** The Secretary of State shall transmit copies of this act to the Speaker  
31 and the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the President and the Secretary of  
32 the United States Senate, and the members of the North Carolina Congressional Delegation so  
33 that they may be apprised of the sense of the North Carolina General Assembly in this matter.

34           **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law.