

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-50

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF VENICE, FLORIDA, OPPOSING MARINE FISH AQUACULTURE IN THE GULF OF MEXICO; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the federal government has expressed interest in opening the eastern Gulf of Mexico to marine finfish aquaculture development; and

WHEREAS, marine finfish aquaculture facilities may pose significant risks to water quality and the marine ecosystem, increasing the potential harm to human and marine life and endangered sea life; and

WHEREAS, the full impact of offshore aquaculture are not yet fully understood by scientists, the industry, or the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the marine finfish aquaculture facilities directly discharge pollutants into the surrounding ocean, including untreated fish waste, pharmaceuticals, and heavy metals, which could exacerbate coral die-off and harmful algal blooms; and

WHEREAS, marine finfish aquaculture would impact our local, wild-capture fishing industry, which is already struggling to rebuild after recent Gulf disasters such as oil spills, hurricanes, and red tide; and

WHEREAS, marine finfish aquaculture will pose threats to vacation destinations on Florida's west coast, which are of intrinsic economic value for numerous industries, serve as essential nursery habitats for recreational and commercial fisheries, and act as natural buffers from storm surge and hurricanes; and

WHEREAS, the City of Venice ("City") recognizes that the tourism and fishing industries both depend on a healthy and vibrant coastal environment and both serve as major economic drivers that benefit the current and future residents, property owners, and visitors of Florida; and

WHEREAS, the City endeavors to be a good steward of the State and region's environment and its resources; and

WHEREAS, the development of offshore aquaculture in the eastern Gulf of Mexico will not effectively address the seafood demand or trade concerns in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the City recommends that it would be more economically and ecologically responsible to pursue more responsible and sustainable seafood production methods, which would pose less risk to the coast environment and economic health, than to utilize the industrial method of finfish cultivation and confinement in open water.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VENICE, FLORIDA, as follows:

SECTION 1. The above Whereas clauses are ratified and confirmed as true and correct.

SECTION 2. Offshore aquaculture will put marine resources, local economy, general health and overall environment at risk; therefore, the City expresses its opposition to such activities and urges the federal government not to pursue such practices off Florida's coast.

SECTION 3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its approval and adoption as required by law.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VENICE, FLORIDA, AT A MEETING HELD ON THE 8TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2020.

Ron Feinsod, Mayor, City of Venice

ATTEST:

Lori Stelzer, MMC, City Clerk

I, Lori Stelzer, MMC, City Clerk of the City of Venice, Florida, a municipal corporation in Sarasota County, Florida, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full and complete, true and correct copy of a Resolution duly adopted by the City Council of the City of Venice, Florida, at a meeting thereof duly convened and held on the 8th day of December 2020, a quorum being present.

WITNESS my hand and official seal of said City this 8th day of December 2020.

Lori Stelzer, MMC, City Clerk

(S E A L)

Approved as to form:

Kelly Fernandez, City Attorney