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SNP welcomes European rejection of oil moratorium

Press release by Ian Hudghton

SNP President **Ian Hudghton MEP** has today (Tuesday) welcomed a vote in the European Parliament which rejected calls for a moratorium on deep-sea oil exploration. The vote was on a report relating to the safety of offshore oil and gas activities.

There had previously been calls in the European Parliament for a ban on deep-sea oil drilling following the Gulf of Mexico disaster. Today's vote however saw such a ban being described in the report as "a disproportionate reaction".

Mr Hudghton commented:

"This summer's oil leak in the North Sea highlights the need to enforce high standards in the offshore sector. Scotland's marine environment as well as the safety of offshore workers require oil companies to be held to account.

"Nevertheless, calls for a ban on deep-sea oil exploration were wholly disproportionate. Scotland's oil industry has already been hit hard by Westminster using it as a cash cow - unnecessary interference from the EU would only have compounded matters.

"As we move towards further powers for the Scottish parliament and the referendum on independence it is clear that offshore safety must be a priority for Scotland's politicians. An independent Scotland must nurture a vibrant offshore sector, which safeguards both our valuable coastal waters and the livelihoods of thousands of oil workers."

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