



David
Suzuki
Foundation



MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

Offshore oil and gas expert visits BC

BC overlooking environmental consequences of offshore oil and gas development, says U.S. expert

VANCOUVER - British Columbia is risking an environmental and economic disaster – like the one that hit California in 1969 – by promoting oil and gas development for Canada’s Pacific coast, says a leading U.S. expert on the subject.

Policy specialist Richard Charter was instrumental in achieving the federal moratorium on new offshore development on the entire U.S. West Coast 22 years ago after a huge oil-well blowout off Santa Barbara in 1969. He has also played major roles securing moratoria on the U.S. East Coast, southwest Florida, and Alaska's Bristol Bay.

“Ever since the Santa Barbara blowout, only politicians opposed to lifting the moratorium have been elected Governor of California,” says Mr. Charter. “Even Florida Governor Jeb Bush, President Bush’s brother, knows he must support the Florida moratorium if he wants to get re-elected. Protecting the coast has become a political litmus test.”

WHEN: Mr. Charter is visiting BC from **July 7 to 11** and is available for media interviews.

WHERE: Mr. Charter will travel to **Victoria** and **Port Hardy** on Vancouver Island, and to **Vancouver**.

WHO: Mr. Charter will meet with elected officials, First Nations, and tourism, fishing and conservation representatives.

For 25 years, Mr. Charter has represented local governments in California on federal decisions on offshore oil and gas development, and he has worked extensively with members of the U.S. Congress and state legislators. Recently, President Bush appointed him to a Department of Energy advisory committee on methane hydrates, a form of frozen sub-sea natural gas. He is Marine Conservation Advocate with Environmental Defense, one of the largest conservation organizations in the United States. More information is available at: http://www.environmentaldefense.org/eg_charter_richard.cfm.

For more information and to arrange interviews, please contact:

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