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**SC Lawmakers May Consider Offshore Drilling**

**Energy Group: More Jobs To Be Created Through Offshore Drilling**

POSTED: 8:40 pm EDT September 16, 2009  
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**GREENVILLE, S.C.** -- South Carolina may consider opening itself up to offshore drilling after an energy group reported that the move could create more jobs and bring in more money to the state's gross domestic product.

The Southeast Energy Alliance told some Upstate lawmakers on Wednesday that drilling for oil and natural gas could create about 2,250 jobs and add \$413 million annually to the state's gross domestic product.

"That hits everyone in their pocketbooks at all levels, in a good way, in a very good way," S.C. Rep. Garry Smith said.

A nonprofit organization has contested the idea, saying that lawmakers need to focus on maximizing its current resources rather than taking chances on oil and gas that might not be there.

"There is a whole host of renewable energy sources and energy efficient sources that we could and should be looking into before we go down this road and drill into the unknown," said John Tynan, of Upstate Forever.

If lawmakers decide to open the state to offshore drilling, it could take almost a decade before the actual drilling can begin, experts said.

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John Tynan  
Upstate Forever  
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SC Offshore Drilling

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