

August 19, 2020

The Honorable Charlie Baker
Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State House, Room 360
Boston, MA 02133

RE: Massachusetts Leadership on Responsibly Developed Offshore Wind

Dear Governor Baker,

As businesses, associations, institutions, and advocates in the Commonwealth, we write to express our support for policies and programs that encourage the expansion of responsibly developed offshore wind. Offshore wind is New England's best and most immediate opportunity to meet our future energy needs, grow the economy, and achieve science-based climate goals.

We greatly appreciate your leadership on offshore wind, beginning with signing the landmark 2016 *Energy Diversity Act*. We also commend your recent July 28 decision to combine the next two procurements into one single 1,600 MW solicitation. That decision helps to optimize points of interconnection to the grid, create economies of scale, and accelerate progress towards our climate goals. Facing the urgency of the climate crisis, we are asking your administration to build on the last four years of progress.

Specifically, we urge you to:

- 1) Raise the Commonwealth's ambitions on offshore wind—increase our target to at least 6,400 MW commercially operating by 2035; publish the schedule for procurements beginning with the next 1600 MW solicitation; move the 1600 MW solicitation to 2021.
- 2) Include racial equity, labor, and environmental protection provisions in upcoming and future RFPs
- 3) Lead other New England Governors in fostering deeper regional collaboration on responsibly developed offshore wind

Raise our ambitions on offshore wind to at least 6,400 MW in commercial operation by 2035:

Massachusetts' leadership in offshore wind is quickly being eclipsed by the ambitious targets, long-term strategic plans, and economic investments of states to our south—including New York, New Jersey, and Virginia.

To lead, we must continually examine how our goals and actions match the urgency of the crises we face. Our state has the highest unemployment rate in the nation. We lost nearly 19,000 clean energy jobs this year during the months of April and May alone. Massachusetts needs the economic benefits this industry will bring. The level of those benefits will depend on the market signal we send and the supply chain investments we attract. The COVID-19 crisis and the associated economic downturn underscore the need for Massachusetts to harness the full potential of this industry. Offshore wind could drive a local, green recovery by creating thousands of jobs, establishing our region as a clean-tech hub, bringing more tax revenue to the state, and saving ratepayers billions of dollars.

From a climate perspective, we're only just getting started on offshore wind—we need to do more. Offshore wind is critical to our efforts to reach net-zero by no later than 2050. [A recent analysis from the Brattle Group](#) forecasted that New England may require at least 44 GW of offshore wind to achieve an 80% GHG reduction by 2050 and meet the demands from electrifying transportation and

thermal loads. We expect that when published later this year, your Administration's 2050 backcast analysis will indicate that Massachusetts alone will require at least 25GW. Given these volumes, we must start raising our ambitions and planning now.

We urge you to publish the full calendar of offshore wind solicitations with the next procurement initiated and awarded in 2021. We recommend the following timeline:

1. Publish draft RFP – February 2021
2. Publish RFP – May 2021
3. Deadline for submission of bids – August 2021
4. Announcement of award(s): November 2021.

These actions would: a) accelerate our progress toward our net-zero mandate; b) secure the wind resources from the finite, prime lease areas off our coast, which are quickly being claimed by New York; c) expedite the closure of old, polluting power plants, and d) send a clear market signal to the offshore wind industry that Massachusetts and New England deserve long term investments.

We support current efforts by legislative leaders to increase offshore wind requirements and shorten time between procurements. We hope you will support and build on these efforts using executive authority if needed.

Include racial equity, labor, and environmental protection provisions: Offshore wind presents a profound opportunity to increase racial equity and minority economic participation in clean energy. Offshore wind can benefit the communities hardest hit by climate change and that have been historically under-served and overburdened by energy pollution. We are currently studying the policy pathways for increasing minority economic participation in the offshore wind industry, and will be advocating for such measures in the next legislative session. One tool that stands out in our research is the RFP process—we encourage you to explore ways to increase equity, including RFP points for minority economic participation like the successful “Massport Model” demonstrated by the Omni Hotel project.

We request that the Commonwealth require that developers undertake good faith efforts to secure project labor agreements and create high-quality employment. We support securing economic development or domestic content commitments that will build the local supply chain in lasting ways.

The RFP process should also be used to increase environmental protections and require bidders to demonstrate robust environmental monitoring and mitigation plans, including protections for wildlife such as birds and the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale. With the right standards in place, offshore wind can be developed in a manner that protects wildlife and habitat. In demonstration of this, Vineyard Wind reached a [landmark agreement](#) on North Atlantic right whale protection with leading environmental groups. The standards met by this agreement should be required across the entire offshore wind industry. Without such protections, offshore wind projects are at increased risk of causing significant ecological harm and subsequent litigation—and may incur increased costs and delays in the future.

Lead New England Governors in regional collaboration on offshore wind: Finally, we urge you to lead the other New England Governors in deepening regional collaboration on offshore wind. We appreciate your Administration's comments about working with neighboring states on offshore wind in your July 28 letter from DOER, and your [2019 resolution on regional energy cooperation](#). Improved coordination and alignment is a necessary precondition for bringing offshore wind to scale in an efficient, cost-effective way. Coordination will also be necessary to closely monitor the positive

and negative cumulative impacts from concurrent large-scale offshore wind in the Atlantic. The six New England states share a regional grid, interconnected workforces and common ecosystems. A cohesive New England strategy will improve outcomes for port infrastructure, workforce development, stakeholder engagement, wildlife protection and environmental mitigation, equity in economic participation, and transmission infrastructure. As the Governor of the nation's first-mover on offshore wind and the regional leader on the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI), you are well-positioned to lead your New England peers in this collaboration.

We welcome an opportunity to meet with you and your staff to discuss these proposed actions. We encourage you to use the September New England Governors meeting to formalize regional cooperation on offshore wind. We will be sending a letter to all New England Governors in advance of that meeting to advocate for a Governors' Resolution on offshore wind collaboration.

We appreciate your leadership and your attention to date, and we look forward to working with you in the coming months.

Sincerely,

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