

JEFFERSON VAN DREW  
SECOND DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
2447 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE  
BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-6572

MAY'S LANDING OFFICE  
5914 MAIN STREET SUITE 103  
MAY'S LANDING, NJ 08330  
(609) 625-5008

April 14, 2021

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Amanda Lefton  
Director  
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland and Director Lefton:

I am closely monitoring BOEM's designation of offshore wind lease areas near the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. Offshore wind technology places us on the precipice of a new era of American energy and manufacturing; our country can be a world leader in the construction of green energy infrastructure. The United States' offshore wind strategy must incorporate the voices of the many communities and industries that will be impacted by the deployment of offshore wind turbines. America's offshore wind strategy should be oriented around minimizing negative impacts on communities and ecosystems while maximizing the benefits for localities and the nation.

Offshore wind is set to be a significant part of the world's transition to environmentally cleaner energy production. I believe in environmental stewardship and we must take steps to modernize our global energy production. However, there is more to environmental stewardship than just green energy. The Atlantic Ocean has a vast, complex, and delicate ecosystem. Unique oceanographic features such as the Cold Pool in the Mid-Atlantic Bight are home to a plethora of different species. These environs reside directly in several of the currently established lease areas. The construction of wind turbines will require the excavation of miles of sea floor. Once constructed, turbines have been demonstrated to have a direct impact on sea-surface wind speeds and increased turbulence of ocean surface wakes. It is unknown how the proposed project will impact the existing aquatic environments and resident wildlife. As we approach energy policy with a philosophy of environmentalism, it is critical that we consider the impact of offshore wind on the immediate aquatic environment.

Beyond the potential ecological impact, offshore wind will reshape our nearby communities. The manufacturing of wind blades and turbines has the potential to revitalize American industry. This manufacturing will create thousands of high-quality, union jobs. The United States can become the global epicenter of production for offshore wind technology and the benefits to domestic manufacturing are wholly positive which is something I will advocate for.

**We must also ensure that as we create these new jobs, we are not displacing established livelihoods.**

Generations of commercial and recreational fishers have looked at Atlantic water as a source of income, sustenance, and leisure. The Cold Pool is home to some of the most important fisheries in the world and generate hundreds of millions of dollars a year in economic impact. I have spoken with many fishermen, and they continue to feel disenfranchised in this process by both their government and the corporations that now own their established fishing grounds.

Tourism and ocean-related recreational activities along the East Coast sustain thousands of communities and represent billions of dollars of revenues. These communities will be impacted by the wall of turbines that will sit along the horizon for decades to come. At the top of these turbines, which will reach as high as 906 feet, will be flashing red lights that will increase light pollution and be visible for miles in every direction. These physical changes to the horizon, along with the anticipated increase in energy prices for residents and businesses will further impact the day to day lives of these communities.

**Collaterally crippling prosperous industries is unacceptable and cannot be our path.**

To ensure that the United States executes the rollout of offshore wind infrastructure in an efficient manner that takes into consideration all affected parties, I strongly urge you to implement the following measures:

- Enact a more deliberate, more efficient process that considers all potential environmental impacts of wind farms prior to the auctioning of lease areas and final construction approval.
- Engage with and provide transparency for directly impacted communities and industries. Ensure this feedback from these discussions lead to substantive policy changes.
- Provide financial compensation to offset community impacts, loss of revenues, and the anticipated short-term energy costs to consumers and affected businesses.

The United States can and should become a world leader in renewable energy. Offshore wind manufacturing can lead to thousands of new jobs and shifting to renewable energy will help reduce our carbon emissions. We must remain clear-eyed and execute the offshore wind rollout with serious consideration of local ecosystems and communities. This will forever reshape our Eastern Seaboard, and we must ensure it is done correctly.

Sincerely,



Jeff Van Drew  
Member of Congress

CC:

Governor Phil Murphy  
225 West State Street  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Shawn LaTourette  
Acting Commissioner  
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
P.O. Box 402  
Trenton, NJ 08625

Joseph L. Fiordaliso  
President  
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities  
44 S. Clinton Avenue  
Trenton, NJ 08625