



Erik G. Milito
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The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
The Honorable Joe Manchin
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy &
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Brian Schatz
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

December 11, 2019

Dear Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Manchin and Senators Cassidy and Schatz

On behalf of our members, the National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA) submits this letter in advance of the Committee's December 12, 2019 legislative hearing which will include S. 499, the Offshore Wind for Territories Act. NOIA gives our support for this legislation, which would expand the jurisdiction of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) to the waters offshore United States territories. S. 499 is a long overdue change to Federal law that will benefit the citizens of the U.S. territories.

Due to current law, the U.S. territories are unable to reap the many of the benefits of their own resources. This smart legislation provides much needed federal authority for overseeing offshore energy development, including offshore wind energy, in the Exclusive Economic Zone offshore from U.S. territories. Clarifying the Secretary of the Interior's authority and responsibility under OCSLA will provide the support and opportunity for a comprehensive process for planning and developing offshore energy in coordination with the territories.

America's offshore energy industries are ready and able to contribute to the economic and energy security of Puerto Rico, Northern Marianas, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. For example, offshore wind can potentially provide significant investment by providing alternative energy generation and investment into onshore infrastructure. This private investment, which is only made possible through sound public planning through the Department of the Interior in conjunction with the territorial government, can spur economic growth while also offsetting federal investment expenditures.

U.S. offshore wind is on a great trajectory on the Atlantic seaboard, and there could be similar opportunities for the U.S. territories. The highly competitive auction for three wind lease areas offshore Massachusetts held by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) in December 2018 shows that significant investments are picking up for offshore wind development. The 32 rounds of leasing to date have generated a record breaking \$405.1 million in winning bids. That is just the start of spending and investment. As these projects move closer to completion, they will generate even more economic growth and provide new, high paying jobs, and opportunity that should be extended to the U.S. territories.

In addition, as advancements are made in new offshore wind technology, such as floating wind development, this bill provides a significant opportunity to help the U.S. Navy meet its energy requirements as it begins to expand our nation's military footprint on Guam.

NOIA's member companies represent every aspect of offshore energy development and help drive innovation. From leading the U.S. surge to become the top oil and natural gas producer in the world to helping the U.S. lead the world in the reduction of GHG emissions to building a new American offshore wind industry, NOIA members have continuously led our nation forward. We can similarly help lead the effort for offshore energy development for the U.S. territories.

NOIA thanks you for your work on this legislation and urges all members of the Committee, and all of Congress, to support this bill. Passage of this legislation will help America's offshore industries bring jobs, investment, energy security, and, simply, a better life for the U.S. territories and our nation's citizens who live there.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erik Milito". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small mark above the "i" in "Milito".

Erik Milito,
NOIA President