



August 12, 2019

Secretary David Bernhardt
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Bernhardt:

We are writing to express our organizations' support for the approval of the Vineyard Wind Projects' Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). We understand that under Executive Order 13807, One Federal Decision, the agency has up to 24 months to process environmental reviews. However, a favorable decision this month would benefit the entire industry, not just the Vineyard project, by continuing to encourage foreign investment in the United States. Otherwise, a delay will erode investor confidence and slow down the economic growth that the offshore wind industry is bringing to the U.S.

Under the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) direction, the U.S. now has 15 wind energy areas leased with a capacity of 21 GW for offshore wind. The Trump administration's "All of the Above" energy strategy and the focus on large-scale infrastructure is helping to boost the US offshore wind industry. Investment in the U.S. for offshore wind has never been higher, and we have never seen such growth under any previous administration.

In the fourth quarter of 2018, the sale of three wind energy areas provided more than \$400M to the U.S. Treasury. In the same quarter, two private transactions totaling over \$700M were made, when Ørsted purchased Deepwater Wind and its projects, and Shell and EDF purchased a New Jersey Offshore Wind Energy Area. At the beginning of 2019, Virginia utility Dominion announced \$1.1B commitment, the largest utility investment in offshore wind so far.

States up and down the Eastern seaboard have passed legislation to help create a market for offshore wind power. Through states' collective efforts, there is now state financing for more than 20 GW of offshore wind power. In response, industry is showing unprecedented interest in investing in the U.S. and establishing manufacturing facilities. For example, the German-owned EEW, a steel pipe manufacturer and supplier to the oil and gas industry, announced it would be willing to make a \$100M investment in a steel fabrication plant to manufacture steel foundations. This facility will employ over 500 workers.

This is just the first of many announcements that are forthcoming. A slowdown or denial in the permitting process will send a signal that could set back the entire sector. We are concerned that companies will look to other emerging markets such as Asia or South America as places to invest, and the U.S. will not be able to capture the economic investment.

Offshore wind is an industry supporting 40,000 jobs in Europe after it has installed 18 GW of offshore wind. The U.S. offshore wind market has similar job generation potential. These jobs differ from the onshore wind industry and are more aligned with the offshore oil and gas sector, since many of the same companies work in both sectors. For this reason, offshore wind is having a positive impact on job creation in both the Gulf Coast and the Atlantic Coast Regions.

Collectively our organizations represent these offshore wind supply chain companies located throughout the U.S., and Republicans supportive of this new industry' growth.

We are extremely appreciative of the Trump Administration's support for offshore wind. We look forward to a favorable timely decision on the Vineyard Project FEIS, which will enable this project to deliver power in 2021 under the Massachusetts contract as planned. We look forward to continuing to work together towards additional investment in the US and more job growth.

Sincerely,

Business Network for Offshore Wind
Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions
National Ocean Industries Association