



April 20, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker Pelosi and Leaders McConnell, Schumer and McCarthy,

First, we commend you for the bipartisan work you have done to help our country navigate the financial and social upheaval caused by the Novel Coronavirus COVID-19. We know the CARES Act package is already providing assistance to small businesses and individuals across the country, and we appreciate that it is available to those engaged in building renewable energy. However, as you consider the next package to aid in our economic recovery, we hope that you keep a focus on infrastructure and, particularly, renewable energy infrastructure. Doing so could help unlock a new, multi-billion dollar market along America's coasts: offshore wind.

Offshore wind power holds enormous promise for this country. This domestic, clean energy is reliable and can be built in areas—such as the Atlantic and Pacific coasts—that often are difficult for developers of onshore energy infrastructure. Critically, we expect this to be a financial boon for America, with domestic steel and concrete being used by American workers and ships. Further, we expect ports to be upgraded, new transmission lines to be built, and service and supply jobs to bring benefits from the Atlantic Coast to the Gulf of Mexico to the West Coast. According to a recent AWEA study, U.S. offshore wind project development, construction, and operations will support up to 83,000 jobs and \$25 billion per year in economic output by 2030 while also delivering investment in critical coastal infrastructure—a remarkable, American economic and environmental success story.

However, this can only come to fruition if our members are able to navigate the regulatory process at the federal level. We appreciate Secretary Bernhardt's efforts at the Department of Interior to set a predictable timeline for the ongoing Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Vineyard Wind project in recent weeks and the commitment in the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)'s FY2021 budget to timely process other projects currently under review. We believe that the Department should come out of the COVID-19 crisis with the ability to hire even more staff and review these projects on perhaps a more accelerated timeline—offshore wind will provide economic opportunity for thousands of Americans at a time when those jobs are needed most.



We are grateful the Trump Administration agrees that the Department needs more assistance to help prepare for this upcoming wave of projects, as seen in the FY2021 budget request increasing (BOEM) 's Renewable Energy Program to \$26.5 million. We could not agree more, and in fact believe that legislation aimed at jumpstarting the American economy should take this request to heart and provide funding to hire additional staff for federal agencies with oversight of renewable energy permitting and environmental reviews. To this end, we would ask that you use this opportunity to at least grant additional funds to BOEM's Renewable Energy Program—preferably beyond the \$26.5 million request so BOEM has adequate resources to concurrently review several construction and operations plans and to prepare and carry out additional lease area designations and auctions. We likewise believe that the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is in need of additional funding, given that their work will go hand-in-glove with BOEM's as offshore wind continues to expand in the U.S.

Further, we know that as the economy re-starts in the wake of COVID-19 we will need a trained workforce ready to go to work. To that end, we would also strongly encourage you to consider including in this next package of relief items language on job training for emerging renewable energy technologies. For example, the bipartisan Offshore Wind Jobs and Opportunity Act (H.R. 3068/S. 1769) would help prepare Americans to work in this space by partnering with local leaders and educators to prevent a lag between training and labor demand—allowing them to support themselves, their families and their communities immediately.

Again, we thank you for your efforts to aid in America's economic recovery from the devastating outbreak of COVID-19. As you move forward, we hope you will prioritize American energy and opportunities for 21st century energy infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Erik Milito
President
National Ocean Industry Association

Thomas C. Kiernan
CEO
American Wind Energy Association

Liz Burdock
President and CEO
Business Network for Offshore Wind