



NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

1 N Johnston Ave, Hamilton Township, NJ 08609

TEL: [609] 656-7612 FAX: [609] 656-7618

www.SierraClub.org/NJ

To: Sherri L. Golden, Secretary of the Board
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Ave., 1st Floor PO Box 350
Trenton, NJ 08625-0350 Phone: 609-292-1599
board.secretary@bpu.nj.gov

Re: **Offshore Wind Fourth Solicitation Docket No. QO24020109**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the NJBPU's fourth solicitation for offshore wind development in New Jersey. Sierra Club is the country's largest and oldest environmental organization, and its New Jersey Chapter represents over 100,000 members and supporters in the state.

The NJ Sierra Club supports the environmentally responsible siting and equitable build-out of offshore wind (OSW), and is pleased to see the proposed guidance for the fourth solicitation as another round of procurement brings us one step closer toward the state's goal of 100% clean electricity by 2035 and 11GW of offshore wind energy by 2040.

By cutting our fossil fuel reliance, OSW will help alleviate the impacts of climate change statewide. Our communities have already faced the impacts of inland flooding, severe rain and weather events, damaging wildfires and hazardous air quality. Even though these impacts will continue to take a toll in our lives due to the irreversibility of how the climate has already changed, we can prevent them from getting worse. To achieve the necessary carbon emission reductions to protect our communities from the climate crisis, we need a major transition in our energy sector now. Offshore wind is the future, and one of our greatest clean energy solutions that will benefit the local communities here in our state without the further burning of fossil fuels.

OSW can power more than our energy sector, it can engine our state's economy too. The average wind farm off of NJ's shore¹ is expected to create 4,300 jobs and add \$702 million to the state's economy. These jobs include manufacturing, transportation, construction, engineering, and operations and maintenance positions. These are local, green, family-sustaining jobs that will carry our communities into the future. The NJ Sierra Club commends the BPU for its efforts to support economic development so far and ask that you proceed quickly to ensure that New Jersey workers and communities see the benefits.

¹ <https://www.offshorewindnj.org/economic-benefits-wind-farms>



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Furthermore, OSW will also promote public health by improving our regional air quality. Production and combustion of fossil fuels releases dangerous pollutants into the air, and NJ experiences both the local impacts of these pollutants from our in-state fossil fuel power generation as well as the regional impacts from other states in our regional grid, PJM. New Jersey is downwind from various states in our regional grid like Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia, and receives the pollution from intense extractive processes like coal mining and fracking, and from the burning of coal and natural gas itself for power generation. As pollution does not follow state lines, this regional pollution travels and lands right here in NJ. These pollutants result in a wide range of health impacts including early death, heart attacks, respiratory disorders, stroke, and exacerbation of asthma. Additionally, power plants are most often located in Black and Latino communities, where families face the health consequences of fossil fuel pollution. Children who are Black or Latino, or who live in families who are low-income, have higher rates of asthma. 1 in 4 children who grow up in Newark are diagnosed with asthma. This can go on no more. Responsibly developed OSW will aid in cleaning our air, relieve communities of this disproportionate burden, and advance environmental justice.

Overall, OSW will mitigate the consequences of a warming planet and help our state reach our climate, economic development, public health, and environmental justice goals. We urge the BPU to do whatever it can to accelerate our transition to a clean energy future to protect the health and welfare of New Jersey's most vulnerable communities.

Thank you again for your time and the opportunity to submit comments today.

Sincerely,

Anjuli Ramos-Busot

Director

New Jersey Sierra Club