

MEMBERSHIP:

American Clean Power

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Bluepoint Wind

Eric Henry

Equinor

Mike Matthews

Invenergy

Mike Porto

MAREC Action

Evan Vaughan

RWE

Halie Myers

Vineyard Offshore

Carrie Hitt

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Paulina O'Connor

President Christine Guhl-Sadovy
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
44 S. Clinton Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08625-0350

Sherri L. Golden
Secretary of the Board
44 South Clinton Avenue, 1st Floor
Post Office Box 350
Trenton, NJ 08625-0350

RE: In the Matter of the Pre-Build Infrastructure Solicitation, Docket No. QO23100719

Dear President Guhl-Sadovy, Secretary Golden, and NJ BPU Staff,

The New Jersey Offshore Wind Alliance (NJOWA) is an advocacy organization created to be the trusted voice of the offshore wind industry in the state. It is a membership organization representing developers with lease-holding interests in the New York Bight and regional renewable energy organizations. It advocates for the growth and sustainability of the offshore wind industry in New Jersey and is organized through MAREC Action which is a non-profit coalition of developers and manufacturers dedicated to the growth and development of renewable energy across the PJM grid region.

Since 2018, New Jersey has made important strategic decisions to position itself as an offshore wind industry leader. We applaud the BPU for its forward-thinking approach to transmission planning and the nation leading State Agreement Approach. NJOWA submits these comments to champion offshore wind energy and its related infrastructure as a cornerstone of the state's sustainable future. Support for offshore wind and related infrastructure is a commitment to create thousands of high-quality good paying jobs, invigorate communities and local economies, and position the state as a leader in the clean energy sector. Furthermore, the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and improvement in air quality align with New Jersey's commitment to combat climate

EMAIL:

POCONNOR@NJOWA.ORG

WEBSITE:

WWW.NJOWA.ORG
WWW.MAREC.US





change and safeguard public health. New Jersey has already been disproportionately affected by climate change and sea level rise, at a rate that is more than 2x the global average. Over the last 50 years, storms that resulted in extreme rain increased by 71% in New Jersey, which is a faster rate of increase than anywhere else in the United States.

The PBI project and similar infrastructure projects for underground cables and utility systems have been executed for decades. By following best practices in environmental science and engineering, such as proper siting, minimal disruption during construction, and adherence to all state and federal regulations, this infrastructure can be safely and responsibly integrated into our communities and local and regional power grids to provide resilient and reliable power to New Jersey homes. Developing this project in a coordinated manner enables up to four offshore wind projects to deliver substantial benefits to the State, with a single construction effort.

Climate change is a threat to New Jersey's natural resources, communities, infrastructure, and economy. It is imperative that we make the right investments and continue the path to reach 100% renewable energy by 2035. We encourage the timely award for transmission infrastructure investments needed to deliver upcoming offshore wind procurement and continued regional collaboration in ongoing infrastructure planning. Additionally, we support efforts of grid modernization, battery storage development, and the leveraging of federal funds for state grid investments. As New Jersey's moves forward with its transformative shift towards a cleaner energy grid, pre-build infrastructure will be a critical component to its reliability and resiliency.

NJOWA appreciates the opportunity to comment and are happy to serve as a resource to the BPU for offshore wind matters. We recommend the creation of a community advisory group in Monmouth County to provide better engagement and dissemination of information with local stakeholders and urge you to award this project and continue to support the development of offshore wind and related infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration of the above comments,

Paulina O'Connor
Executive Director
New Jersey Offshore Wind Alliance

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