



March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Dear Members of Congress,

The undersigned organizations represent a diverse group of voices, covering project developers, service and supply companies, and other advocates for domestic, reliable, and affordable renewable energy. Together, we respectfully request that both chambers preserve the House's language repealing the 10-year moratorium on offshore wind leasing off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida in the final, conferenced version of the Senate's *The United States Innovation and Competition Act of 2022* and the House's *America COMPETES Act of 2022*.

Offshore wind provides a generational opportunity for renewable energy development and domestic manufacturing jobs. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has stated, "The demand for offshore wind energy has never been greater. Recent technological advances, falling costs, and tremendous economic potential make offshore wind a promising avenue for diversifying our national energy portfolio, creating good-paying union jobs, and tackling climate change..."<sup>1</sup> While much of the national focus has been on the prospects for "first-mover" projects in the northeastern United States, we also know that the southeast has great promise for offshore wind. For example, a sweeping Wood Mackenzie study last year stated that the Carolinas alone could see nearly \$45 billion in capital investment and over 37,000 jobs supported annually over the next decade from offshore wind.<sup>2</sup>

Critically, we are already seeing manufacturing job opportunities related to offshore wind. This includes not just the areas immediately near ongoing projects, such as in New York<sup>3</sup> and Virginia<sup>4</sup>, but also further afield. Texas, for example, has seen an announcement of vessel construction in Brownsville<sup>5</sup> and construction of 1,500 ton substations in Ingleside.<sup>6</sup> A Louisiana facility helped build the nation's first commercial offshore wind farm off Block Island.<sup>7</sup> A pipeline of leases off the southeastern U.S. would result in a continued increase in manufacturing jobs both close to those projects and across the country.

However, there is a cloud over this energy and economic potential. In the closing months of the Trump Administration, vast swaths of acreage were withdrawn from future federal renewable energy leasing for a decade, starting in North Carolina and reaching down around Florida and into the eastern Gulf of Mexico.<sup>8</sup> In essence, much of the south had a vital and reliable renewable

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/secretary-haaland-highlights-tremendous-offshore-wind-opportunities-virginia-governor>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.noia.org/offshore-energy-industry-releases-economic-impact-study-new-federal-offshore-wind-lease-auctions/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.news10.com/news/us-first-offshore-wind-tower-plant-to-be-built-in-albany/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://energynews.us/2021/10/25/siemens-gamesa-chooses-virginia-for-offshore-wind-turbine-blade-factory/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.texasmonthly.com/news-politics/offshore-wind-power-brownsville-shipyard-renewable-energy/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.windpowerengineering.com/orsted-and-eversource-plan-offshore-wind-substation-in-texas/>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.nola.com/news/business/article\\_a6cea87a-d435-5b09-bfc5-9e14423ad6e9.html](https://www.nola.com/news/business/article_a6cea87a-d435-5b09-bfc5-9e14423ad6e9.html)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-09-28/trump-s-offshore-oil-ban-to-halt-coastal-wind-farms-too>

energy resource taken away from it, along with the jobs and economic development it would bring. This happened despite strong support from the region, particularly in the key areas off the coast of North Carolina where the Governor<sup>9</sup> and much of the Congressional delegation<sup>10</sup> support offshore wind.

This also happened even though wind leasing is a proven revenue raiser for American taxpayers, even before job creation and economic development are considered. A recent lease sale in the New York Bight region brought in nearly \$4.4 billion<sup>11</sup> in revenue. Also, the Congressional Budget Office projected that a repeal of the wind leasing ban would bring in hundreds of millions of dollars when it was considered as part of the Build Back Better Act.

Thankfully, legislation reversing this ban in the form of the *Restoring Offshore Wind Opportunities Act* (H.R. 2635 / S. 3808) has been introduced in both chambers. The House bill was thoroughly vetted by the House Natural Resources Committee and has now been included in the House's *America COMPETES Act* under Section 71106. We strongly support this inclusion and respectfully request that the Senate accede to the House's language in any conference committee process and include this provision in the final draft.

Given the opportunity, this industry will provide reliable and affordable energy through a strong pipeline of offshore wind projects, and it will create jobs from New England to the Gulf Coast, from the Pacific to the Hudson Valley. To do so, we need Congress to act.

Respectfully,

**National Ocean Industries Association**  
**The Business Network for Offshore Wind**  
**American Clean Power Association**  
**National Association of Manufacturers**  
**Southeastern Wind Coalition**  
**The U.S. Chamber of Commerce**  
**The American Waterways Operators**

//Delivered electronically

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<sup>9</sup> <https://governor.nc.gov/news/press-releases/2021/06/09/governor-cooper-commits-offshore-wind-power-north-carolina-creates-jobs-transitioning-clean-energy>

<sup>10</sup> <https://ross.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/ross.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/NC%20Delegation%20Letter%20to%20BOEM%204.8.21.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/biden-harris-administration-sets-offshore-energy-records-437-billion-winning-bids-wind>