

Testimony in support of H5816: Affordable Clean Energy Security Act

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To Chair Solomon and the honorable Members of the House Corporations Committee:

I speak for both myself, a Senior Marine Scientist, Emerita at the Graduate School of Oceanography and as the State Coordinator of Citizens' Climate Lobby, a national, non-partisan organization with over 600 members in Rhode Island.

The clean energy available to Rhode Island from offshore wind is superior –

- More energy is available off this coast than other coastal zones in the United States
- It is located next to big population centers so that the energy does not need to travel far
- It is easier to build wind turbines here because we have a shallow continental shelf
- It is most powerful in winter when it can balance out or add to other energy sources like solar that are minimal in winter

I joined with other marine and environmental scientists from University of Rhode Island and Brown to create a website containing scientifically accurate information about offshore wind in RI in a question and answer format for the general public. Realoffshorewind.com We each lent our expertise as specialists to examine this critical question: is offshore wind an efficient, safe choice for New England?

All sources of energy have impacts. How does this one hold up in comparison to other choices? Does it serve to reduce carbon emissions as hoped? How serious are its impacts on marine and bird life and how can they be mitigated?

We spent months researching what is presently known about these and many other questions because our own previous research has been in service of understanding and protecting marine life. We are also experts in the science of and the impacts of climate change. We believe that the benefits of offshore wind far outweigh the negative impacts of fossil fuels. We know that in a short time this will result in financial savings for all.

There are disruptions to the fishing industry, and its members should be compensated and there are mechanisms being developed to do this. This bill does address the benefits to other workers in other industries that offshore wind supports in a careful, fair and just manner.

As an oceanographer, well informed in the science of climate change, and as representative of Citizens Climate Lobby acutely aware of the lack of political will at the national level, I can speak confidently that passing this law is urgent and that it will be of benefit to all Rhode Islanders.

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