

August 27, 2019

The Honorable David Bernhardt
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
Room 5421
14th Street and Constitution Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Bernhardt and Secretary Ross,

We are writing to you to express our support for offshore wind development and our concern with the recent development which potentially will undermine efforts to promote regulatory certainty for this industry.

Our states are partnering with the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) in advancing responsible offshore wind development in the Atlantic Ocean. Recent technological advances and extensive public processes have now attracted some of the most sophisticated energy companies in the United States and the world to invest off our coastlines. This investment is a win for our country as it will not only increase our domestic energy production and further America's energy independence but also create thousands of jobs – including manufacturing jobs – in our states and other states far from the coast.

A decision regarding the first project undergoing environmental review by your Departments, Vineyard Wind, has now been delayed due to a decision to undertake an expanded “cumulative impacts” review of a greater build-out of offshore wind in the Atlantic. While we support assessing and mitigating impacts of large-scale offshore wind development, we are disappointed that this review has adversely affected the timeline for the Vineyard Wind Project. Like other industries, it is critical that states and the federal government establish and maintain clear regulatory timelines so as to incentivize the necessary capital investment. We encourage you to explore options for ensuring that supplemental review be conducted expeditiously so that a Record of Decision for the Vineyard Wind Project can be issued by March 2020. Further government delay would have negative impacts on this project, offshore wind development along the east coast and the further expansion of American jobs that support this industry.

Our states look forward to continuing to collaborate with your Departments on advancing offshore wind development. Please let us know how we can provide any assistance as we work together to support this important industry to our states and the nation.

Sincerely,



Governor Charlie Baker
Governor of Massachusetts



Governor Ned Lamont
Governor of Connecticut



Governor Janet Mills
Governor of Maine



Governor Chris Sununu
Governor of New Hampshire



Governor Ralph Northam
Governor of Virginia