



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: October 18, 2023

YouTube Live Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YihFABcp3Kk>

**Attachment (1): COA Letter to Governor Murphy and
Christine Guhl-Sadovy, President, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities**

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OCEAN ADVOCACY GROUP CALLS FOR GOVERNOR MURPHY & NJBPU TO PUT BRAKES ON RECKLESS OFFSHORE WIND

Campaign Launched to Cancel NJ's Third Solicitation for Offshore Wind While Offshore Wind Industry in Crisis & New Jersey at Risk

Long Branch, NJ – Today, with the ocean as a backdrop, representatives of Clean Ocean Action (COA) announced a key call to action on offshore wind energy development. The group focused attention on New Jersey's pending Third Solicitation for offshore wind energy development. Amid the increasing financial, technical, economic and scientific uncertainties within the offshore wind industry and increasing threats to the marine ecosystem, COA urged NJ Governor Murphy and the NJ Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) to cancel the Third Solicitation and not award any additional OSW offshore wind energy development contracts.

“In the name of good governance, fiscal responsibility, and environmental stewardship, we must stop digging deeper into the hole of reckless offshore wind development,” said **Cindy Zipf, Executive Director, Clean Ocean Action**. “The current irresponsible push for offshore wind is an unprecedented assault and massive experiment on the ocean, marine ecosystem, thousands of livelihoods, and the quiet seaside culture that millions enjoy from around the world. It is unacceptable for the Governor and NJBPU to move forward with even more commitments now, much less a doubling of offshore wind projects. There is now strong bi-partisan support, including from NJ's leading Democrats, for not moving forward with more offshore wind,” she added.

The ocean advocacy group of nearly 40 years penned and sent a letter to Governor Murphy and Christine Guhl-Sadovy, the recently appointed NJBPU President, on October 18, 2023. The letter reads: “In the name of good governance, fiscal responsibility, and environmental stewardship, Clean Ocean Action (‘COA’) calls upon the New Jersey executive and legislative branches to cancel the massive third solicitation of offshore wind project bids, which could more than double the state's current development obligation.¹ No awards should be given until

¹ *New Jersey Board of Public Utilities Opens Third Offshore Wind Solicitation of Between 1.2 GW and 4 GW*, N.J. BD. OF PUB. UTILS. (March 6, 2023), <https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2023/approved/20230306.html>

more information is known about the economic and environmental feasibility of offshore wind energy development on the New Jersey coast.

“The Governor and the NJBPU have an obligation as public servants to protect the public interest, which includes stewardship of all our resources. It would be beneficial to all stakeholders involved, including the OSW industry itself, to await the outcomes of the studies and investigations, both proposed and in progress, before moving blindly ahead with the third solicitation,” said **Erika Bosack, Esq., Policy Attorney for Clean Ocean Action**.

The letter continues and requests that no awards in the Third Solicitation be granted until:

1. “The forthcoming Government Accountability Office (“GAO”) study on offshore wind development in the North Atlantic Planning Area is publicly released, and federal, state, and local officials and agencies have an opportunity to review the report, publish a response, and implement recommendations;
2. there is an independent, comprehensive offshore wind pilot project in the New York Bight to assess the actual (rather than aspirational and speculative) economic and environmental impacts of pre-construction, construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning activities; and
3. an independent, comprehensive investigation into marine mammal deaths off the New Jersey coast since December 2022 concludes that offshore wind development is not a significant cause.”

In early August 2023, NJ Senate President Nicholas Scutari and NJ Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin raised concerns about the four bids in New Jersey’s Third Solicitation, issuing the following statement: “The legislature has concerns about the BPU’s approach on the offshore wind projects. There are still many unanswered questions about the economic impact these projects will have on ratepayers, as well as potential impacts to one of our state’s largest economic drivers, tourism at the shore. The BPU should be able to share these impacts with the communities affected and the legislature before moving forward with these new offshore projects.”

NJ’s OSW Solicitations

New Jersey Governor Murphy has a goal of 11,000 MW of OSW by 2040. In its First and Second Solicitations, the NJBPU has already awarded 3,750 megawatts to companies to build 3 projects in 343,834 acres of ocean, totaling 380 turbines. Currently, NJBPU seeks to award up to 4,000 MW in its Third Solicitation. Applications for four new projects have been submitted to NJBPU, which will cover the expanse of 373,623 more acres of the ocean off New Jersey. The applications were submitted for:

1. Community Offshore Wind (RWE & National Grid) (125,964 acres)
2. Leading Light Wind (Invenergy and energyRE) (83,976 acres)
3. Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind (Shell New Energies US and EDF Renewables North America) (79,351 acres)
4. Attentive Energy (TotalEnergies, a French multinational integrated energy and petroleum company) (84,332 acres)

Campaign Launched

Clean Ocean Action released a new petition to gather support for the cancellation of New Jersey’s Third Solicitation for offshore wind energy. The petition is posted <https://chng.it/kB2qTRjrSX> and can also be found at CleanOceanAction.org. The group also called upon people to contact their legislators to raise concerns and encourage the NJBPU to “put the brakes on more offshore wind.”

“Clean Ocean Action is spearheading a campaign to bring responsibility and rationality to offshore wind energy development. We are calling upon the people of New Jersey to demand more responsible government actions,” said **Kari Martin, Advocacy Campaign Manager**. “None of this risky business would fly if it were proposed on

over a million acres of public land. With the help of groups, businesses, the public and elected officials, the ocean has come back from the brink. However, now, the ocean is in peril. We must speak-up, and push for actions to protect the ocean once again.”

The petition is in addition to the previous petition calling for an investigation into the marine mammal deaths in the region since December 2022, for which nearly 400,000 people have signed.

The group also released a sample resolution for towns and other organizations to sign calling for the cancellation of the Third Solicitation. The petition and resolution are posted at CleanOceanAction.org and also on the group’s social media outlets. The actions are directed at Governor Murphy and the NJBPU as the Third Solicitation awards announcement is expected sometime in the fourth quarter of this year.

Clean Ocean Action Joins Court Battle Against Ocean Wind 1

Also, at today’s seaside press conference, COA spoke briefly to the organization’s role as a co-plaintiff in Cape May County’s legal challenge to Ocean Wind 1, filed on October 17, 2023.

“As a co-plaintiff in Cape May County’s legal challenge of Ocean Wind 1, the first offshore wind energy project off the New Jersey coast, Clean Ocean Action stands tall in defense of the ocean and remarkable marine life,” said **Zipf**.

Clean Ocean Action’s Counsel, Andrew Provence of Litwin & Provence, explained COA’s role in the lawsuit: “The purpose of this litigation is to invalidate the approval of the construction of a mammoth industrial energy facility off our coast and to further invalidate the authorization for its owner/operator to harm marine mammals, including the highly endangered North Atlantic right whale, that live in these waters. In issuing these approvals, the federal government failed to abide by numerous procedural and substantive protections afforded the marine environment under numerous laws, including National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act, and the Marine Mammals Protection Act. COA joins Cape May County and others in this fight because this project will irreparably harm and forever change the ocean environment upon which so many people and living creatures depend.”

For the complaint, go to CleanOceanAction.org

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