



Roots 2Empower

Fostering an equitable, regenerative future.

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House Corporations Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

April 1, 2025

Dear Chair Solomon and House Corporation Committee Members:

I write today in strong support of H5816, legislation that requires Rhode Island to procure 1,2000 MW of offshore wind energy by 2029, which is essential for meeting the carbon emissions reduction mandates in the Act on Climate. Roots 2Empower is a community-based environmental justice organization working primarily in Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls. Our mission is to foster an equitable, community-driven regenerative future, and procuring more offshore wind energy is foundational to building that future.

Based on a 2019 report by the Brattle Group, offshore wind energy is the most abundant clean energy resource available to us in the region.¹ By prioritizing local clean energy resources, the transition to a regenerative economy will deliver more than environmental benefits – it will stimulate the economy, creating thousands of jobs for Rhode Islanders who have been left behind. With increasing uncertainty at the federal level, states must demonstrate strong support for the offshore wind industry, providing predictability in our procurement schedule and clarity in our project standards and permitting process. This legislation does just that while ensuring a timeline that enables Rhode Island to take advantage of the few areas available to contract from the New England lease area.² It takes several years for the federal government to designate lease areas and hold an auction. It takes even longer for offshore wind developers who acquire a lease to begin the site assessment necessary to design proposed construction and operations plans and submit them for environmental review. The current federal administration has made clear it will not be initiating that process, which means if we don't act now, it will be five or more years until more areas become available for development. Rhode Island does not have time to wait. Our state is not on track to meet the next emissions reduction benchmark of emissions 45% below 1990 levels by 2030. This legislation will get us back on track, ensuring we meet the Act on Climate goals, while stimulating the economy and providing thousands of jobs for Rhode Islanders in need.

I urge you to pass H5816 through the committee and work with your colleagues towards a supportive vote from your chamber.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tarshire Battle
Executive Director, Roots 2Empower

¹https://www.brattle.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/17233_achieving_80_percent_ghg_reduction_in_new_england_by_20150_september_2019.pdf

²<https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/commercial-wind-leasing-offshore-rhode-island-and-massachusetts>