



Submitted via email

March 19, 2026

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon Jr.
Chair, House Committee on Corporations
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H-7727 – Offshore Wind Procurement Policy Study Commission

Dear Chair Solomon and Members of the Committee:

The Office of Energy Resources (OER) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on H-7727. OER respectfully opposes this legislation. Rhode Island is able to pursue renewables and offshore wind procurements through the state's Affordable Clean Energy Security Act, which has no limitations on the ability to procure from multiple offshore wind projects and/or megawatt capacity opportunities at or greater than 1,200 megawatts of capacity.

This bill establishes a target of procuring 1,200 megawatts of offshore wind by 2030, which is challenging for several reasons. Setting a fixed procurement target of this scale in statute is problematic given the rapidly changing economics, supply chain challenges, and federal policy uncertainty currently facing the offshore wind industry. Recent project cancellations, renegotiations, and cost increases across the Northeast demonstrate the difficulty developers are encountering in bringing projects to market over the next few years, while recent federal actions and reporting suggest additional permitting and financing uncertainties that could further delay projects heading into the 2030s. Taken together, these market and regulatory dynamics make it imprudent to mandate a rigid offshore wind procurement target in statute. Energy procurement decisions of this magnitude should remain flexible and responsive to evolving conditions to ensure reliability and protect ratepayers from unnecessary cost exposure.

The bill also raises significant governance concerns. It establishes a study commission composed in part of private stakeholders, including advocacy organizations and labor representatives, and then directs OER to initiate rulemaking to implement the commission's recommendations. By requiring OER to begin a regulatory process based on the commission's findings—without additional review or authorization from the Administration or the General Assembly—the bill effectively delegates substantial policymaking influence on a mixed public-private body. Although the commission is framed as advisory, the statutory language creates strong pressure for OER to translate its recommendations directly into regulations, potentially leading to major changes in offshore wind procurement policy without the normal legislative or executive review that typically accompanies decisions of this magnitude.



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
**OFFICE OF
ENERGY RESOURCES**

*One Capitol Hill, 4th Floor
Providence, RI 02908
www.energy.ri.gov*

This would also impact OER's ability to confidentially engage in sensitive discussions and potential agreements or procurements that are developed between OER and other State Energy Offices in New England on multi-state procurements in future years, if those efforts become subject to oversight by a mixed public-private commission. Even assuming a favorable federal administration heading into 2029, it will take time, potentially several months, to over a year before the federal agencies are rebuilt with staffing and directives to support the federal government's role in evaluating renewable energy and offshore wind permits heading into the 2030s.

OER is happy to keep the Committee and General Assembly informed on offshore wind matters over the next few years, including future multi-state New England procurement efforts. OER respectfully urges the Committee not to pass this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Kearns
Acting Commissioner
Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources

CC:

The Honorable Arthur Handy
Members of the House Committee on Corporations
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Lynne Urbani, House Policy Director