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Rhode Island Works Best When We Say **UNION YES.**

March 19, 2026

Chairman Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
House Corporations Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Support HB-7727 – Offshore Wind Procurement Policy Study Commission

Dear Chairman Solomon and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island AFL-CIO representing 80,000 union members and 275 affiliated local unions, I write in support of House Bill 7727 introduced by Representative Handy, establishing an Offshore Wind Procurement Policy Study Commission to evaluate policies and procurement structures necessary to support the long-term development of offshore wind in Rhode Island.

Currently, Rhode Island has an offshore wind workforce that is trained, experienced, and already delivering real results. Our tradespeople in the construction industry have put in millions of work hours on offshore wind projects like Revolution Wind, which just began delivering power to the grid last week. Offshore wind workers have developed a unique skill set, acquired necessary certifications, and committed themselves to an industry that they are proud of. And they've made these investments because Rhode Island is positioned to be a national leader in this industry and now our workforce is ready to make that happen.

Amid the chaos in Washington, this bill takes a stable and productive step forward in creating a pathway for Rhode Island to continue to lead, through a procurement of 1,200 megawatts of offshore wind by 2030. The Offshore Wind Procurement Policy Study Commission would consist of representatives from labor, state agencies, environmental organizations, ratepayer advocates, and industry experts to evaluate policies, procurement structures, and market mechanisms needed to support the long-term development of offshore wind in Rhode Island in a way that is cost-effective, reliable, and aligned with the state's climate and economic development requirements.

Additionally, for RI workers and their families this is about affordability and reliability. Offshore wind helps lower wholesale electricity prices by reducing our reliance on volatile fossil fuels. By diversifying our energy mix with local offshore wind, we strengthen our grid reliability and protect Rhode Islanders from global fuel supply disruptions. We must ensure this work continues and our state is prepared and ready to take bold action to meet the growing need for stable, reliable energy that's produced locally.

Rhode Island has positioned itself as a national leader in offshore wind development and we must find ways to continue that local investment. **When our procurement stalls, projects stall, and when projects stall, our workforce is the first to feel the effects.** Through no fault of their own, workers suffer lost work hours, lost opportunity, and uncertainty within the job market. This provides added pressure at home, with rising utility prices that largely depend on a volatile fossil fuel market.



We make Rhode Island work.

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For these reasons, I urge the Committee to support House Bill 7727 to guarantee our energy investments uplift Rhode Island families and ease the burden of skyrocketing utility prices. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Erica A. Hammond'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Erica A. Hammond
Legislative Director, Rhode Island AFL-CIO