

For Immediate Release

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REPRESENTATIVES RICE, PASCRELL LEAD NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY DELEGATIONS LETTER CALLING FOR FEDERAL ACTION ON OFFSHORE WIND DEVELOPMENT

The group of lawmakers is urging the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to issue long-overdue wind development area designations in the New York Bight and to hold new lease auctions

WASHINGTON – U.S. Representatives Kathleen Rice (NY-04) and Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ-09) sent a [bipartisan letter](#) today with members of the New York and New Jersey congressional delegations to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), a federal agency within the Department of the Interior, requesting that the agency designate final [Wind Energy Areas](#) in the New York Bight and hold new lease auctions for potential developers.

Rice and Pascrell’s letter renews the call for action made to BOEM in a [New York delegation letter](#) that Rice led in August 2020. BOEM was scheduled to announce Wind Energy Areas (WEA) in early 2019. However, the Trump Administration did not adhere to this timeline, and two years later, final designations still have not been made. Final WEA designations must be issued by BOEM prior to lease auctions in order for developers to bid on the right to apply for federal permits to construct wind projects in these areas.

Today’s letter was also signed by U.S. Representatives Frank Pallone Jr. (NJ-06), Jerrold Nadler (NY-10), Nydia Velázquez (NY-07), Gregory W. Meeks (NY-05), Albio Sires (NJ-08), Yvette D. Clarke (NY-09), Paul D. Tonko (NY-20), Tom Reed (NY-23), Donald M. Payne Jr. (NJ-10), Grace Meng (NY-06), Donald Norcross (NJ-01), Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ-12), Adriano Espaillat (NY-13), Josh Gottheimer (NJ-05), Thomas R. Suozzi (NY-03), Joseph D. Morelle (NY-25), Andy Kim (NJ-03), Tom Malinowski (NJ-07), Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14), Mikie Sherrill (NJ-11), Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D. (NY-16), Mondaire Jones (NY-17), and Ritchie Torres (NY-15).

“As a leader in the fight against climate change, New York State has legally committed to generating 9,000 megawatts of offshore wind by 2035—enough energy to power up to six million homes,” **said Rep. Kathleen Rice.** “But there is no way that New York, New Jersey, or any other

state can meet ambitious goals unless the federal government issues new wind energy area designations. The prolonged delays that we experienced during the Trump Administration stalled efforts at the state level, harming both the environment and the economy in the process. That's why I led this letter with Congressman Pascrell and our delegation colleagues demanding action and requesting a briefing with BOEM to get the ball rolling again. I'm confident that the Biden Administration will heed our call for action and follow through on its promise to prioritize offshore wind."

"Growing America's offshore wind industry is a vital path to reducing our reliance on dirty fossil fuels and modernizing America's infrastructure for future generations. Right now under Governor Phil Murphy, New Jersey is leading the way in expanding clean energy, especially for offshore wind," **said Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr.** "I look forward to working with President Joe Biden's administration to build on his offshore wind commitments that will support jobs and fight the negative impacts of climate change. I was proud to see my offshore wind tax incentive enacted into law in the year-end relief bill, and am pleased to partner with Rep. Kathleen Rice to lead our delegations in encouraging the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to help our state and region. Because at the end of the day, protecting our planet for our children and grandchildren must be our ultimate goal."

The Biden Administration has already taken positive steps related to offshore wind. On January 27, President Biden signed an [executive order](#) directing the Interior secretary to identify steps to double offshore wind production by 2030.

Several individuals and groups made statements in support of Rice and Pascrell's efforts, including New York Senator Todd Kaminsky, New York Offshore Wind Alliance, New York League of Conservation Voters, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Climate Jobs NY, Long Island Association, and National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA).

"Harnessing the power of wind energy is integral to revitalizing our economy, creating good jobs and transitioning our grid to green, renewable resources," **said New York State Senator Todd Kaminsky (9th District).** "Representative Rice's push to jumpstart the offshore wind leasing process is vital to our efforts to help our state achieve its ambitious—yet crucial—wind power goals under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. I applaud the Congresswoman for her continued leadership in protecting our planet."

"The New York Offshore Wind Alliance deeply appreciates the effort of Congresswoman Rice and members of the New York and New Jersey delegations to ensure that BOEM completes the process for designating new wind energy areas in the New York Bight," **said Joe Martens, Director of the New York Offshore Wind Alliance.** "This designation and subsequent leasing of new wind energy means family wage jobs, upgrades and investments in the region's ports, reduced pollution and greenhouse gases and billions of dollars in new investments. Without new lease areas off the New York and New Jersey coastline, neither state will be able to meet their aggressive renewable energy and climate goals."

"New York is moving full steam ahead to meet its ambitious clean energy goals but we need more wind energy areas in the NY Bight to help expand clean energy and create green jobs," **said Julie Tighe, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters.** "That's why we need BOEM to finalize these designations and allow Long Island to lead the way on renewable offshore wind power. Thank you to Congressman Rice for her partnership on this environmental issue."

"Wind energy is blowing into New York and has become instrumental in the historical transition away from fossil fuels to renewable energy," **said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment.** "The progress in reducing our carbon footprint is real but now we need for BOEM to advance wind energy areas so the transition can continue. The five proposed offshore wind farms will take us halfway to our goal of 9,000mw of offshore wind power, but we will not meet our full mandate without additional designated wind energy areas. We are at a critical juncture in changing the way we produce energy and we need the new administration to advance this important piece of the renewable energy puzzle and designate additional wind energy lease areas in the New York Bight this year."

"The tides are shifting towards the clean energy economy," **said Mariah Dignan, Long Island Organizer for Climate Jobs NY.** "With the White House laser-focused on taking action on climate by creating thousands of good union jobs, we can kick-start that here with new offshore wind lease areas in the NY bight."

"The U.S. needs a post-COVID economic recovery and holding an offshore wind lease sale in the New York Bight is a significant step towards a tremendous energy and economic opportunity," **said Erik Milito, President of the National Ocean Industries Association (NOIA).** "It has been more than two years since the most recent offshore wind lease auction. BOEM should issue the final Wind Energy Areas (WEA) and hold lease auctions in the New York Bight as quickly as possible. NOIA thanks Representatives Rice and Pascrell and the other signatories for their leadership in advancing new wind opportunities for our nation."

"Additional investments in offshore wind and renewable energy jobs will help strengthen the Long Island economy," **said Kevin S. Law, President & CEO of the Long Island Association.** "And thus, we support Congresswoman Rice's efforts to have the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management designate the final Wind Energy Areas in the New York Bight."

[The full text of Rice and Pascrell's letter can be found here.](#)

New York State Offshore Wind Background:

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act on July 18, 2019, which established a legally binding commitment to generate 9,000 megawatts of offshore wind by 2035. Currently, New York State is poised to benefit from five proposed offshore wind projects in federal waters: **Empire Wind** (816 megawatts, 15-20 miles south of Jones Beach), **Sunrise Wind** (880 megawatts, 30 miles east of Montauk), **South**

Fork Wind (130 megawatts, 35 miles east of Montauk), Empire Wind 2 (1,260 megawatts), and Beacon Wind (1,230 megawatts). Additional projects are needed in order for the state to achieve 9,000 megawatts of offshore wind energy by 2035. However, new projects cannot get underway until BOEM finalizes new Wind Energy Areas and holds new lease auctions.

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About the New York Offshore Wind Alliance: The New York Offshore Wind Alliance (NYOWA) is a diverse coalition of organizations with a shared interest in promoting the responsible development of offshore wind power for New York. NYOWA is a new project of the Alliance for Clean Energy New York (ACE NY). www.aceny.org/NYOWA