



October 18, 2019

The Honorable David Bernhardt, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Vineyard Wind

Dear Secretary Bernhardt,

On behalf of Massachusetts businesses, organizations, and residents, we are collectively writing to urge your timely release of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Vineyard Wind, and issuance of final permits by March 2020 to allow it and the development of this new offshore industry to move forward on schedule.

Over the past two decades, we have literally been the national stage for the debate over offshore wind development in the U.S. As key stakeholders representing thousands of businesses and organizations, we have closely examined the merits and concerns over offshore wind development, and in some cases, where in our assessment, the costs have outweighed the benefits, have opposed such development.

We applaud the Interior's multi-year effort to collaborate with state governments and the wide range of stakeholders on establishing responsible siting for offshore wind facilities. That process produced the necessary groundwork to pursue this new industry in a clear, predictable, and responsible manner, taking all interests into account. It is a testament to the Department's hard work that the most recent auction of federal lease areas was so successful, reaping hundreds of millions of dollars. As a product of this process, Vineyard Wind's project has been closely scrutinized on the Federal, State, and local level and we stand in unanimous support for its development.

For centuries, coastal resources have been our greatest economic asset and the foundation of our economy and way of life. We have a keen understanding that the health of our coastal environment and our economy are inextricably linked. In Eastern Massachusetts, those of us dedicated to economic development are constantly seeking ways to support marine economic development through new industries. That is why we, along with our partners in higher education and business, have worked for years on initiatives such as the Blue Economy ([www.bluecapecod.org](http://www.bluecapecod.org)), seeking to network our business, research, and educational resources to develop new economic opportunities in our oceans and ports.

As the first major offshore wind development in the country, Vineyard Wind represents the unlocking of a massive economic driver for our region and beyond. The pursuit of locally sourced energy captured by locally built offshore wind facilities is among the largest economic opportunities ever for our region.

Offshore wind in general represents a diversification of our existing ocean-based industries: we have ports, maritime knowhow, and the human resources to anchor this new industry. Fishing, aquaculture, recreation, and shipping have made up the cornerstone of our marine economy for many years. We firmly believe that the pursuit

of wind energy in our oceans will offer a new industry that can and will coexist with these uses. While it seems new to us, the technology is well-established, and our region, as well as the rest of the country, is ready to capture this new economic opportunity.

Our region is strongly supporting vocational training initiatives to ensure that the job creation occurs here and that the marine skills present in our communities can be purposed to construct and operate offshore wind facilities. Offshore wind is perhaps the best opportunity to leverage the skills and resources we already have, in order to make our economies more resilient, and our communities more productive.

Understanding all of this about our region, you will know why the delayed release of the Vineyard Wind EIS is concerning to us. We also have concern that any late challenges and setbacks to Vineyard Wind could have a cooling effect on an entire industry. We are poised to do great things in advancing our maritime economy through the development of new energy sources, but in order to unleash that potential, we need fully permitted projects so that the skilled professionals in our region: captains, welders, pipefitters, divers, port workers, technicians, electricians, marine scientists, engineers and others can be allowed to get to work. We are already mobilized, and ready to help deliver these projects, to repurpose our skills base and our infrastructure to anchor this new energy industry off our shores, and in this country.

As Secretary of the Interior and steward of our nation's public lands, we ask you to make every effort possible to promptly complete permitting for Vineyard Wind, both for the sake of that important initiative, and to fulfill the bright future that this new industry offers our maritime economy.

Sincerely,

Wendy Northcross, CEO  
Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce

Mary Lou Palumbo, Executive Director  
Mashpee Chamber of Commerce

James Rooney, President & CEO  
Boston Chamber of Commerce

Chris Cooney, President & CEO  
Metro South Chamber of Commerce

Marie Oliva, President & CEO  
Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce

David Martin, President & CEO  
Nantucket Chamber of Commerce

S. Kyle Hinckle, Executive Director  
Brewster Chamber of Commerce

Rick Kidder, President & CEO  
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Mary Cavanaugh, Executive Director  
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Amy Naples, Executive Director  
Plymouth Chamber of Commerce

James Russo, Executive Director  
Eastham Chamber of Commerce

Radu Luca, Executive Director  
Provincetown Chamber of Commerce

Michael Kasparian, President & CEO  
Falmouth Chamber of Commerce

Denise Dever, Executive Director  
Sandwich Chamber of Commerce

Nancy Gardella, Executive Director  
Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce

Mary Vilbon, Executive Director  
Yarmouth Chamber of Commerce

CC. The Honorable Wilbur Ross  
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