



**CITY OF NEW BEDFORD**

**JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR**

May 17, 2022

Senator Michael Barrett  
State House, Room 109-D  
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Cynthia S. Creem  
State House, Room 312-A  
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Bruce E. Tarr  
State House, Room 308  
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Jeffrey N. Roy  
State House, Room 43  
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Tackey Chan  
State House, Room 42  
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Bradley H. Jones, Jr.  
State House, Room 124  
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Senate Bill 2842 and House Bill 4529

Dear Conference Committee Members:

Thank you for your leadership in advancing policies that will mitigate the effects of climate change. Senate Bill 2842 and House Bill 4529, which are currently before your committee to be reconciled with one another, represent comprehensive efforts to set an example in climate policy for the rest of the country, but also to put Massachusetts in a position to compete for federal and private sector funding for clean energy development. While I generally support both bills, I write to underscore the importance of certain provisions that would bolster Greater New Bedford's economic competitiveness in offshore wind.

For several years, business and civic leaders in our region have urged the Baker Administration to follow the lead of the East Coast's offshore wind states in incentivizing industry investment through the energy contract solicitation process. As has been widely recognized now, the Administration has taken a less assertive approach to securing industry investment, signaling to the industry that Massachusetts is primarily concerned about price while losing out on investment to other states. We are grateful that the bills before you reflect the legislature's attempt to rectify this problem by striking a more appropriate balance between energy prices and economic development.

For these reasons, I wish to voice my support for those provisions that advance our efforts. Specifically, I urge passage of Section 20 of the House bill. By removing the "price cap" from the solicitation process, it would raise the likelihood of more market participants, and therefore more competitive bids. As a basic tenet of classical economic theory, price controls tend to constrain supply. Even if the price cap in Section 83C was originally justifiable, the offshore

investment commitments in the overall score. To signal to the market the Commonwealth desire to attract investment, I believe the assigned value should be not less than ten percent of the overall score (by comparison, New York assign twenty percent to investment commitments in its solicitation process).

Public investment will continue to play an important role of course, and on that front, I support the establishment in Section 5 of the House bill and Section 15 of the Senate bill of offshore wind investment funds. Either version would lead to the more rapid build out of port infrastructure to support the industry. Here in New Bedford, there are hundreds of million dollars of additional infrastructure we could build to support the offshore wind industry.

I wish also to voice my concern, however, over Section 77 of the Senate bill, which would establish a commercial fisheries commission to develop and recommend strategies, methods, and tools to promote sustainability of the Commonwealth's commercial fishing industry. While we believe this commission would represent a positive step towards deconflicting offshore wind and fishing, New Bedford would not be adequately represented on the commission. The Port of New Bedford, which includes the Town of Fairhaven, accounts for 70% of Massachusetts's annual landings and about seven times as much as the next largest Massachusetts port (See generally [www.fisheries.noaa.gov](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov)). According to the leading study of fishing activity in the wind energy areas from Massachusetts to Virginia, more than eighty five percent of the Massachusetts landings in those areas were New Bedford landings. To the extent that commercial fishing in Massachusetts is impacted by the offshore wind construction and operation, the issue is almost entirely a New Bedford issue. It would not be unfair to expect that at least half of the members of any "statewide" working group on fishing and offshore wind should be derived from the New Bedford area.

In the growing competition among East Coast states for offshore wind and other clean energy industry investment, procurement changes and funding for facilities and infrastructure are the most important aspects to be included in a final version of legislation. I commend you on your efforts and am looking forward to help implement changes and additions to the way we compete effectively for offshore wind and other related industry investment.

Sincerely,



Jon Mitchell

cc: New Bedford delegation