

Thoughts on the Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind Project Construction and Operations Plan Approval.

Bob Stern, Save LBI

It's hard to express the disappointment and sadness felt with this decision. I believe this will go down as one of the greatest environmental and social blunders that the State of New Jersey has ever made, and we have made some big ones.

Lets step back and use a little common sense here: **placing a project** that industrializes the NJ coastline between Atlantic City and Barnegat Light with the installation of 200 of the largest wind turbines available, each three times the height of the Statue of Liberty, closer than any other project in the world 9 miles off a beautiful 18-mile long barrier island beach, and in a primary migration path of a critically endangered whale, that would:

- jeopardize that whale's existence by ignoring the blockage of its migration from the project's high levels of underwater noise from the operation of these larger turbines
- Destroy the shore experience with those highly visible turbines and disturbing blade rotation, airborne noise, reduced breeze, and higher local air temperature and humidity.
- Degrade the nearby Brigantine National Wilderness Area from construction air pollutants
- Have a severe economic impact on tourism, jobs, rentals, property value, and tax revenues.
- Dramatically increase electric bills to every user in the State, placing an additional financial burden on households and businesses.
- Require new costly infrastructure for turbine removal and onshore processing, if that can even be done
- Remove key fishing grounds from use, and
- Impair our defense air radars in Gibbsboro, NJ,

Without having an plan or even knowing whether you can remove these turbines at the end of their useful life or upon their failure, or knowing how to deal with structural failures such as the Vineyard Wind turbine blade that spontaneously collapsed off the coast of Nantucket Island in July, the damage from such failures to the ocean and beaches, how that damage will be remediated, and who will pay for it.

Or having a clear purpose for it,

- The project will only have a "negligible" effect on climate change according to the official project environmental impact statement (EIS) . Other EISs say that " it is anticipated that there would be no collective impact on global warming as a result of offshore wind projects". Because climate change is caused by global heat transfer that is already underway, this project would only delay future sea level rise for a matter of days, not stop or even reduce it.
- The project remains in search of a purpose. First, it was climate change benefit, when that was debunked it was air quality but that was shown to be minor. The NJ construction jobs created are few and temporary. The latest is to meet energy demand, but there are many other ways to do that. The purpose stated in its EIS is only for the agency to approve or disapprove it.

It should be obvious to any rational decision-maker that siting a huge offshore wind project that brings this extraordinary degree of short and long-term environmental and social damage, with no clear

purpose to justify it is a huge mistake. Decision-makers should acknowledge the significant new information that has come forward since this project area was selected, recognize the strength of the legal challenges ahead, change course and save everyone on both sides of this issue a lot of time, work, and money. If they stubbornly do not, we look forward to the Court hearing where they can explain their reasoning to a Judge.