March 1, 2023

Marian Swain

Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER)

Re: Massachusetts 83C Round 4 Offshore Wind Solicitation: Request for Public Comment

Dear Ms. Swain:

As previously introduced, TurbineHub is the only US, wind-energy-focused data and geospatial analysis software purpose-built on the world's leading GIS platform, Esri ArcGIS, to enable the next generation of wind energy development and investment. TurbineHub provides crucial data about offshore wind power, allowing business leaders and policy makers alike to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how this growing industry operates.

TurbineHub is committed to the expansion of offshore wind power and its contribution to a sustainable energy future. TurbineHub believes the integration of existing and under-development infrastructure can enable the offshore wind energy industry to produce returns for all stakeholders.

1. **Procurement Size:**
   What should be the maximum procurement target, in megawatts

(MW), for the 83C Round 4 solicitation? 2020 MW (50% of four leases in Massachusetts with procurable capacity remaining.

Lease Number	Company	MW Total Capacity (3 MW/SqKm)	Percentage of Remaining Unprocured Potential Capacity (%)	Remaining Unprocured Potential Capacity (MW)
OCS-A 0500	Bay State Wind LLC	1,759	100%	1,759
OCS-A 0520	Beacon Wind LLC	1,564	21%	334
OCS-A 0521	SouthCoast Wind	1,547	22%	340
OCS-A 0522	Vineyard Northeast LLC	1,608	100%	1,608
Total				4,041

Figure 1. Remaining Capacity by Offshore Wind Lease

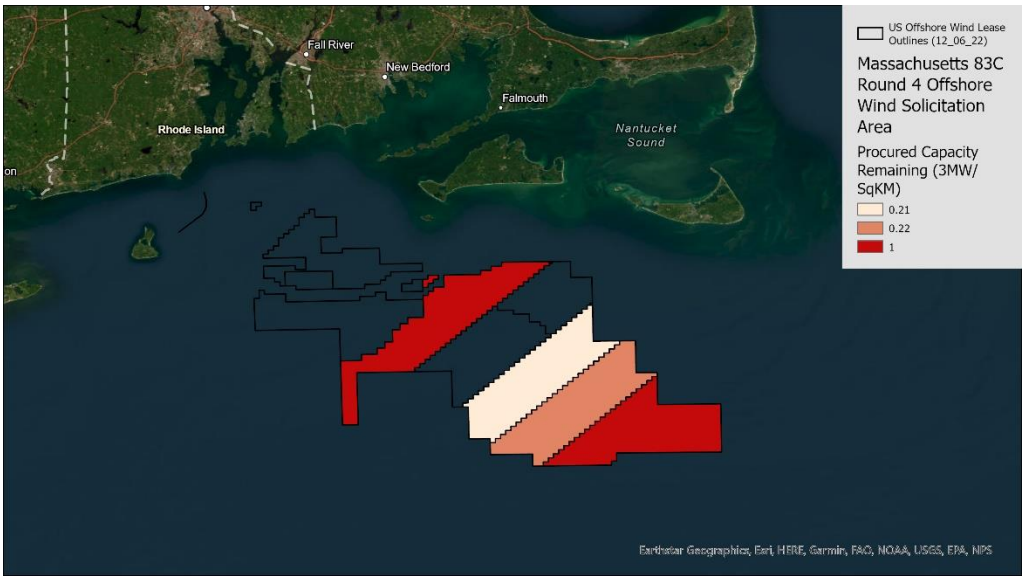

Figure 2. Map of Remaining Capacity by Offshore Wind Lease

2. Procurement Schedule:

The 83C Round 4 RFP must be issued within 24 months of the prior solicitation pursuant to Section 83C. a. What should the RFP drafting parties consider when designing the schedule for the 83C Round 4 solicitation, including deadlines for bid submission and selection of projects for negotiation?

Month 0: Begin drafting the RFP and hold initial stakeholder meetings to gather input from the community and industry experts. The RFP drafting parties should consider factors such as the state's energy goals, project size and location, transmission infrastructure, environmental considerations, and cost.

• Month 4: Release the draft RFP for public comment, allowing interested parties to provide feedback and suggestions.

• Month 6: Finalize the RFP and release the final version, incorporating feedback from stakeholders and addressing any concerns or issues.

• Month 8: Deadline for developers to submit initial applications, which should include a project summary, proposed project location, interconnection information, and other relevant details.

• Month 10: Evaluation period for initial applications, during which the RFP evaluation team should assess each proposal based on criteria such as technical feasibility, economic viability, environmental impact, and community benefits.

• Month 12: Select top-scoring applications and invite them to submit full proposals, providing more detailed information about their project plans, financing, and other aspects.

• Month 14: Deadline for developers to submit full proposals, which should include a detailed project plan, financial model, environmental impact analysis, and other relevant documentation.

• Month 15: Evaluation period for full proposals, during which the RFP evaluation team should conduct a thorough review of each proposal, including site visits and interviews with project stakeholders.

• Month 16: Select winning proposals and begin negotiations, including discussions on project costs, power purchase agreements, transmission infrastructure, and other relevant terms.

• Month 18: Finalize negotiations and sign contracts, ensuring that all terms and conditions are agreed upon and that the project can move forward.

• Month 20: Issue notice to proceed for construction, allowing the project to begin construction and ultimately provide clean, reliable energy to Massachusetts residents and businesses.

Throughout the procurement process, it is important for the RFP drafting parties to maintain transparency and communicate effectively with all stakeholders, including developers, environmental groups, and community members. By following a carefully planned timeline and taking into account all relevant factors, the 83C Round 4 RFP can successfully promote the growth of offshore wind in Massachusetts while ensuring that projects are developed in a responsible and sustainable manner.

b. How could the 83C Round 4 schedule be designed to best align with other offshore wind procurements being conducted or planned in neighboring Northeastern states?

1. Adjust the timeline of the 83C Round 4 RFP to avoid conflicts with neighboring state procurements. For example, if a neighboring state is planning to issue an RFP in a certain month, the Massachusetts RFP could be scheduled for a different month to ensure that developers have sufficient time and resources to submit competitive proposals for both procurements.
2. Coordinate with neighboring states on key procurement milestones, such as the deadline for developers to submit proposals and the selection of winning projects. This could involve sharing information on evaluation criteria, scoring methodologies, and other procurement details to promote consistency and transparency across states.
3. Explore opportunities for joint procurement or collaboration on offshore wind projects that span multiple states. For example, neighboring states could jointly solicit proposals for a large-scale offshore wind project that would supply energy to multiple states, or they could coordinate on transmission infrastructure to maximize the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of their respective projects.

3. Commercial Operation Date:

What should be the latest allowable commercial operation date for projects bidding into 83C Round 4, and why?

Based on the status of the offshore wind projects in neighboring Northeastern states, it would be reasonable to consider a latest allowable commercial operation date for projects bidding into 83C Round 4 to be around 2026-2028.

As of the latest information available on Permits.gov, the Bay State Wind project has completed its SAP but has yet to receive its COP, while the Beacon Wind project has submitted its COP and an EIS is planned. The SouthCoast Wind project has submitted its COP and an EIS is currently in process. Lastly, the Vineyard Northeast project has not yet completed its SAP or received its COP.

Given that none of the neighboring states' offshore wind projects are expected to begin commercial operations until at least 2026 and taking into account the significant amount of time required to complete the permitting and construction process for offshore wind projects, it would be reasonable to expect a similar timeline for projects bidding into 83C Round 4. Therefore, setting the latest allowable commercial operation date for 2027 would provide a reasonable amount of time for developers to complete the necessary permitting and construction activities, while also allowing for coordination with neighboring states' procurement schedules.

4. Transmission:

a. How should the 83C Round 4 requirements regarding transmission and interconnection of proposed projects be designed to maximize efficient use of the onshore transmission system?

The offshore wind procurement process should consider the most efficient use of the onshore transmission system. One suggestion is to incorporate a high voltage direct current (HVDC) system with a transmission interconnect between projects. This approach is in the best interest of all Massachusetts stakeholders. In a

recent response to a request for information on transmission of offshore wind, Hexicon USA LLC proposed a networked system for New England that could integrate approximately 20 GW using 2 GW cables. The planned offshore transmission system for New England utilizing 2 GW HVDC cables would reduce the number of cables needed for the project from 17 to 10. The system would include a northern-most 2 GW (or 2.6 GW) cable to allow for the export of onshore wind and hydro from northern Maine from the Orrington area or injections of offshore wind to serve northern Maine and New Brunswick.

Moreover, the system would provide an expandable link to interconnect significant floating offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine, which does not have the needed transmission infrastructure in northern New England to be developed. The system can also serve as a connector point for additional deep-water platforms and connections to Maritime Canada offshore wind. A line connecting the New Hampshire coast would allow for imports of offshore wind and exports of power from the Seabrook nuclear power station, which could directly route power to many parts of the New England grid.

By using a networked system, power flows continue into the grid on other lines, supporting frequency and voltage so that additional reserves to replace lost power above 1,200 MW in order to meet NERC BAL standards are not necessary. This approach is more effective than a simple radial cable because it reduces the loss of source limit, which is currently 1,200 MW in New England. The mesh-ready export cables, which are currently being used in New York and New Jersey, are limited to 1,310 MW. With the proposed networked system, the loss of a 2 GW cable does not result in the loss of 2 GW of power injections into the system, as power flow continues into the grid on other lines.

Therefore, to maximize efficient use of the onshore transmission system, the 83C Round 4 requirements regarding transmission and interconnection of proposed projects should be designed to incorporate an HVDC system with a transmission interconnect between projects. This approach will reduce the loss of source limit, optimize the use of transmission infrastructure, and benefit all stakeholders involved in the project.

b. Please comment on potential ways to integrate 83C Round 4 with ongoing regional transmission initiatives, including the Joint State Innovation Partnership

for Offshore Wind.

In order to maximize the efficient use of the onshore transmission system and integrate 83C Round 4 with ongoing regional transmission initiatives, it is essential to prioritize the procurement of a well-planned transmission system that can enable the integration of renewables. The Joint State Innovation Partnership for Offshore Wind is an excellent example of a regional transmission initiative that can be leveraged to achieve this goal.

One potential way to integrate 83C Round 4 with the Joint State Innovation Partnership for Offshore Wind is to coordinate the procurement process with the development of a comprehensive transmission plan. This plan should take into account the transmission needs of both the offshore wind projects bidding into 83C Round 4 and other renewable energy projects in the region. It should also consider the potential for interconnection between projects, as well as the need for HVDC transmission lines to maximize the efficient use of the onshore transmission system.

Moreover, it is important to ensure that the transmission plan is developed in close collaboration with all stakeholders, including developers, regulatory bodies, and local communities. This will help to ensure that the plan reflects the needs and interests of all parties involved and promotes a sustainable, socially responsible approach to offshore wind development.

Finally, it is worth noting that a well-planned transmission system can have significant economic benefits, including the creation of jobs and the stimulation of local economies. By investing in the development of a comprehensive transmission plan, we can ensure that the offshore wind industry in the Northeast is well-positioned to meet the growing demand for clean, renewable energy while maximizing economic benefits for the region.

c. Please comment on the advantages and challenges of the "Meshed Ready"transmission requirement in the 2022 NYSERDA offshore wind RFP (ORECRFP22-1) and what factors would need to be considered for such an approach to be applicable in a Section 83C solicitation.

Advantages of Meshed-Ready Transmission Requirements:

1. Improved Reliability: A meshed network of transmission lines can offer improved reliability by reducing the risk of blackouts or power outages caused by failures in a single transmission line.
2. Increased Efficiency: Meshed transmission systems can increase the efficiency of power delivery by reducing transmission losses and minimizing the need for curtailment of wind power.
3. Flexibility: Meshed transmission systems can offer greater flexibility in accommodating new wind farms, as the network can be expanded to accommodate additional capacity with minimal disruption to existing infrastructure.
4. Cost Savings: A meshed network can be more cost-effective in the long run compared to individual radial connections, as it can reduce the need for expensive upgrades or replacement of transmission lines.
5. Shared Benefits: A meshed network can provide benefits to multiple stakeholders, including wind farm developers, utilities, and consumers, by enabling the development of additional renewable energy capacity and improving grid stability.
6. Environmental Benefits: A meshed transmission network can support the transition to a low-carbon economy by enabling the integration of more renewable energy sources and reducing the reliance on fossil fuels.

Challenges of Meshed-Ready Transmission Requirements:

1. Upfront Costs: The development of a meshed transmission network can require significant upfront investment in new infrastructure, which can be a barrier to entry for some developers.
2. Complexity: Meshed networks are more complex than radial connections and require careful planning and coordination among stakeholders.
3. Regulatory Challenges: Meshed networks may require changes to regulatory frameworks and the development of new transmission planning processes to enable their implementation.
4. Technical Challenges: The implementation of a meshed network can present technical challenges, such as the integration of different transmission technologies and the management of complex power flows.
5. Permitting and Environmental Concerns: The development of new transmission infrastructure can be subject to permitting and environmental review processes, which can add time and costs to the project.

6. Coordination with Other Initiatives: Meshed transmission requirements may need to be coordinated with other offshore wind transmission initiatives in the region, which can present additional challenges related to stakeholder engagement and planning.

7.

5. Inflation, Supply Chain, and Macroeconomic Factors:

a. How could 83C Round 4 be designed to best account for current and future rates of inflation and other supply chain and economic pressures on the offshore wind industry to both ensure project viability and protect Massachusetts ratepayers?

To best account for current and future rates of inflation and other economic pressures on the offshore wind industry in 83C Round 4, the procurement should consider implementing the following measures:

1. Include inflation escalation clauses in power purchase agreements (PPAs) with developers to ensure that energy prices remain in line with the cost of living and other economic factors. The escalation clauses can be tied to specific indices, such as the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or Producer Price Index (PPI), to provide a reliable measure of inflation.

2. Encourage the use of local suppliers and contractors to reduce supply chain risks and costs. By engaging local businesses and industries, the project can create new jobs and foster economic growth while supporting local supply chains.

3. Develop a long-term supply chain strategy that takes into account the expected growth of the offshore wind industry and the potential for supply chain disruptions. This could include measures such as diversifying suppliers, building strategic stockpiles of critical components, and establishing contingency plans for emergencies.

4. Encourage innovation and investment in new technologies that can improve the efficiency and reliability of offshore wind farms. This could include new designs for wind turbines, advanced sensors and monitoring systems, and more efficient methods for assembling and maintaining offshore infrastructure.

5. Consider the potential impact of global economic trends, such as trade disputes and currency fluctuations, on the cost of offshore wind projects. This could involve developing strategies to mitigate risk, such as hedging against currency fluctuations or securing long-term supply contracts with fixed prices.

6. Partner with other states and countries to leverage economies of scale and reduce costs. Collaborating with other jurisdictions can help to reduce the overall cost of offshore wind projects by sharing expertise, resources, and infrastructure.

In order to protect Massachusetts ratepayers, the 83C Round 4 procurement should also consider implementing the following measures:

1. Ensure that the procurement process is transparent and competitive, with clear guidelines and criteria for evaluating bids. This will help to ensure that the final cost of energy is reasonable and competitive.

2. Set clear targets for the cost of energy and incentivize developers to meet these targets through bonus payments or other rewards. This will encourage developers to find ways to reduce costs and improve efficiency.

3. Ensure that developers are required to provide comprehensive financial guarantees and insurance to cover potential cost overruns or delays. This will help to protect ratepayers from unexpected costs.
4. Include strict penalties and consequences for developers who fail to meet their contractual obligations, such as delayed construction or failure to deliver energy as promised. This will encourage developers to meet their obligations and protect ratepayers from unnecessary costs.
5. Consider alternative financing models, such as project finance or public-private partnerships, that can help to reduce the overall cost of the project and limit exposure to risk.
6. Establish a regular review process to ensure that the project remains viable and cost-effective throughout its lifecycle. This could involve regular audits and evaluations of the project's financial and operational performance, as well as ongoing assessments of supply chain risks and economic factors.

b. Please comment on when costs for offshore wind project components and labor should be expected to stabilize, including any comments on how that expected timing would impact bid development for 83C Round 4.

Offshore wind project components and labor costs are subject to numerous factors, including technology advancements, market competition, and supply chain disruptions. Therefore, it is challenging to pinpoint an exact timeline for cost stabilization. However, several trends suggest that the industry is likely to see price stability in the mid- to long-term.

One key factor contributing to cost stabilization is the growing experience and expertise of the offshore wind supply chain, which will increase efficiency and lower costs. Additionally, as the industry scales up and more projects are built, economies of scale are likely to reduce costs, especially for components such as turbines, foundations, and cables.

Another trend that may contribute to cost stability is technological innovation. As research and development continues, new materials and design improvements may lead to more efficient turbines and components, lowering costs for future projects.

Regarding labor costs, it is difficult to predict when they will stabilize as they are influenced by numerous factors, including immigration policies, labor laws, and availability of skilled workers. However, as more projects come online, the supply of skilled labor may increase, which could help stabilize labor costs.

To account for the uncertainty surrounding offshore wind project costs, it may be prudent for 83C Round 4 to include provisions that allow for adjustments in project pricing as market conditions change. This could include indexed pricing for key components or periodic reviews of project pricing based on changes in labor or supply chain costs.

Developers bidding on 83C Round 4 should carefully consider market trends and projections for cost stabilization when developing their bids. They may also want to consider contingency plans in case of unforeseen cost increases or supply chain disruptions. By doing so, they can help ensure project viability and protect Massachusetts ratepayers from excessive costs.

c. Please comment on the Inflation Adjustment provision of the 2022 NYSERDA offshore wind RFP (ORECRFP22-1) and what factors would need to be

considered for such an approach to be applicable in a Section 83C solicitation.

The Inflation Adjustment provision included in the 2022 NYSERDA offshore wind RFP is an important consideration for any future offshore wind solicitations, including Section 83C. This provision is designed to provide a mechanism to adjust project pricing in response to changing market conditions, such as inflation and changes in supply chain costs. To make this provision applicable in a Section 83C solicitation, the following factors would need to be considered:

- Market conditions: The inflation adjustment provision should be designed to reflect current market conditions, including the availability of labor, materials, and other factors that can affect project costs. This should be based on current and projected market data to ensure that the provision is relevant and effective.
- Project timelines: The inflation adjustment provision should be designed to align with project timelines to ensure that costs are adjusted in a timely manner. This will require careful planning and coordination between the state and developers to ensure that adjustments are made as needed and that they do not delay project timelines.
- Cost controls: The inflation adjustment provision should be designed to include cost controls to ensure that project costs remain within a reasonable range. This can include caps on price adjustments or other measures to ensure that the state and ratepayers are not exposed to excessive cost increases.
- Transparency: The inflation adjustment provision should be designed to be transparent to all stakeholders, including developers, investors, and ratepayers. This can include regular reporting on cost adjustments and other factors that may impact project costs.
- Contractual obligations: The inflation adjustment provision should be included as a contractual obligation in project agreements to ensure that all parties are bound by its terms. This will provide a clear framework for addressing cost adjustments and will help to avoid disputes or other issues that could delay project development.
- Coordination with other states: To ensure that the inflation adjustment provision is effective, it may be necessary to coordinate with other states in the region to align project pricing and other terms. This will require close collaboration and cooperation between state agencies and developers, as well as ongoing monitoring of market conditions and other factors that may impact project costs.

In summary, the Inflation Adjustment provision included in the 2022 NYSERDA offshore wind RFP provides a useful framework for addressing changing market conditions and other factors that can impact project costs. To make this provision applicable in a Section 83C solicitation, careful consideration should be given to market conditions, project timelines, cost controls, transparency, contractual obligations, and coordination with other states. By addressing these factors in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, Massachusetts can ensure that offshore wind projects remain viable and cost-effective for ratepayers over the long term.

d. Please comment on recommended timing applicable for an inflation adjustment price provision, if warranted, including any comments on the price adjustment timing in the 2022 NYSERDA RFP, which allows for an adjustment from bid submission to BOEM COP approval. Please also comment on how such a provision should be considered in the evaluation process when comparing fixed

price bids to inflation-adjusted bids.

Timing is a critical factor to consider when incorporating an inflation adjustment price provision. The provision must strike a balance between protecting developers from inflationary pressures and ensuring that

ratepayers receive fair and stable energy prices. If the adjustment is too infrequent, developers may be hesitant to bid on projects due to uncertainty around future inflation rates. On the other hand, if the adjustment is too frequent, ratepayers may be exposed to unnecessary cost fluctuations.

The 2022 NYSERDA RFP allows for an inflation adjustment from bid submission to BOEM COP approval, which can provide some certainty to developers and ratepayers. However, this approach may not be appropriate for all procurement processes. For example, in Massachusetts, the timing of BOEM COP approval can vary widely depending on the complexity of the project and the number of permits required. Therefore, an inflation adjustment tied solely to BOEM COP approval may not be sufficient to adequately protect developers or ratepayers.

Instead, a more appropriate approach for the Massachusetts 83C Round 4 solicitation may be to include an inflation adjustment provision that is triggered at specific intervals throughout the project development process. For example, the adjustment could be tied to major milestones such as the completion of environmental permitting or the start of construction. This would provide greater certainty to developers and ratepayers and reduce the risk of cost fluctuations.

When evaluating fixed price bids versus inflation-adjusted bids, it is important to consider the potential risks and benefits of each approach. Fixed price bids may offer greater certainty to ratepayers, but they may also be less attractive to developers who are concerned about the impact of inflation on their costs. Inflation-adjusted bids, on the other hand, may provide greater certainty to developers and reduce their exposure to inflationary pressures. However, these bids may be more complex and difficult to evaluate, as they require a detailed understanding of inflation rates and how they impact project costs over time.

Ultimately, the decision of whether to include an inflation adjustment provision in the 83C Round 4 solicitation will depend on a variety of factors, including the current economic climate, inflation rates, and the level of risk that developers and ratepayers are willing to tolerate. A careful analysis of these factors, as well as consultation with industry experts and stakeholders, can help to determine the most appropriate approach for the Massachusetts offshore wind procurement process.

6. Federal Funding:

a. How could 83C Round 4 be designed to ensure Massachusetts ratepayers receive the maximum benefits of the new federal funding opportunities, tax credits, and/or other programs available to offshore wind developers under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)?

To ensure Massachusetts ratepayers receive maximum benefits from federal funding opportunities, tax credits, and other programs available to offshore wind developers under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the 83C Round 4 procurement process should be designed to incentivize developers to take advantage of these opportunities. One potential approach is to include evaluation criteria related to the use of federal funding and tax credits in the project proposal, such as the extent to which the developer can leverage these programs to reduce the overall cost of the project or increase local economic benefits.

In addition, the 83C Round 4 solicitation should be designed to encourage competition among developers, particularly those who are willing and able to take advantage of new funding and tax credit opportunities. This could be achieved by including evaluation criteria related to project cost, economic impact, and local content, which would incentivize developers to submit proposals that offer the greatest benefits to Massachusetts ratepayers.

Furthermore, the state could consider partnering with offshore wind developers to maximize the benefits of these federal programs. For example, the state could offer additional incentives, such as expedited permitting or access to state-owned facilities, to developers who are able to secure federal funding or tax credits. This could help to reduce the overall cost of the project, thereby reducing the burden on Massachusetts ratepayers.

The 83C Round 4 procurement process should be designed to encourage competition among offshore wind developers, incentivize the use of federal funding and tax credits, and maximize the benefits to Massachusetts ratepayers. By taking these steps, the state can ensure that its offshore wind industry continues to grow and thrive while also delivering significant benefits to local communities and ratepayers.

b. Please comment on when the Internal Revenue Service should be expected to issue regulations related to relevant tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is responsible for issuing regulations related to relevant tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Given the complexity of tax regulations and the need for stakeholder input, it is difficult to predict exactly when the IRS will issue these regulations. However, based on past experience, it is likely that the IRS will take several months to a year to issue guidance related to new tax credits.

It is important to note that until the IRS issues guidance, it may be difficult for offshore wind developers to accurately calculate the value of the tax credits and to include them in their bids for offshore wind projects. This uncertainty could make it more difficult for developers to secure financing for their projects and could delay the development of new offshore wind capacity.

To mitigate these risks, it may be advisable for Massachusetts to include provisions in the 83C Round 4 RFP that provide flexibility for developers in the event that the IRS issues new guidance related to tax credits. For example, the RFP could include provisions that allow for the adjustment of bid prices in the event that new tax credit values are issued by the IRS after the bid submission deadline. Alternatively, the RFP could require developers to include an estimate of the tax credit value in their bid, with the understanding that the final value may be subject to change based on IRS guidance.

It is important for Massachusetts to closely monitor the development of IRS guidance related to tax credits under the IRA and to ensure that the 83C Round 4 RFP includes provisions that provide flexibility for developers in the event of changes to the tax credit landscape. This will help to ensure that Massachusetts ratepayers receive the maximum benefits of the new federal funding opportunities, tax credits, and/or other programs available to offshore wind developers under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act.

c. Please comment on the provisions of the Rhode Island RFP requesting bidders to describe how they would consider EDC customers in the event of the availability of any tax credit or other government grant or subsidy not contemplated in their proposals.

The provisions of the Rhode Island RFP requesting bidders to describe how they would consider EDC customers in the event of the availability of any tax credit or other government grant or subsidy not contemplated in their proposals is a proactive approach to ensure that any benefits of government programs are passed on to customers. This approach can also be applied to the Section 83C solicitation by requesting bidders to provide a plan for how they will consider Massachusetts ratepayers in the event of any new federal funding opportunities, tax credits, or other programs available to offshore wind developers under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

The plan should include specific details on how the benefits will be passed on to ratepayers, including any reductions in the cost of energy or increased investment in local communities. Bidders should be required to

provide a clear explanation of how the benefits will be distributed and how they will ensure that ratepayers receive the maximum benefits of the new federal funding opportunities, tax credits, and/or other programs available to offshore wind developers under the BIL and IRA.

In addition to requesting a plan, the Section 83C solicitation could also include specific requirements for bidders to consider ratepayers in their proposals. For example, bidders could be required to provide a detailed analysis of how their project will impact ratepayers, including any potential cost savings or increases. Bidders could also be required to provide information on how they will engage with local communities and stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of the project are distributed fairly.

The evaluation process for the Section 83C solicitation should consider the bidder's plan for how they will consider Massachusetts ratepayers in the event of any new federal funding opportunities, tax credits, or other programs available to offshore wind developers under the BIL and IRA. Bidders who provide a comprehensive plan that demonstrates a commitment to ensuring that ratepayers receive the maximum benefits of these programs should be given favorable consideration in the evaluation process.

7. **Economic Development, Workforce, and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI):**
   How could 83C Round 4 be designed to best encourage investments and commitments that maximize economic benefits to the Commonwealth, support workforce harmony, and advance goals for DEI? Specifically, please refer to Section 2.3.2.i of the 83C Round 3 and to the relevant provisions in Section 61 of An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind.

1. Incorporate workforce development requirements: Similar to 83C Round 3, Round 4 should require bidders to provide a detailed plan for workforce development, including strategies for recruiting, training, and hiring local workers, particularly those from underrepresented communities. The plan should also prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion, and include metrics for measuring the success of these efforts.

2. Establish targets for local content: To maximize economic benefits to the Commonwealth, 83C Round 4 should establish targets for local content in the supply chain, particularly for major components such as turbines, foundations, and cables. This will encourage investment in local manufacturing facilities and the creation of high-quality jobs in the region.

3. Encourage collaboration with local businesses: 83C Round 4 should incentivize bidders to collaborate with local businesses, including small and minority-owned businesses, to help grow the local supply chain and maximize economic benefits to the Commonwealth. Bidders could be required to submit a plan for how they will work with local businesses and provide evidence of successful partnerships in past projects.

4. Consider project location: The location of the offshore wind project can have a significant impact on economic benefits to the Commonwealth. Projects located closer to shore, for example, may require less expensive transmission infrastructure, and can more easily utilize existing port facilities, creating opportunities for local jobs and economic development.

5. Establish DEI goals and requirements: To advance goals for DEI, 83C Round 4 should establish clear goals and requirements for diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workforce, supply chain, and community engagement. These requirements could include the use of diverse hiring practices, tracking and reporting on diversity metrics, and engaging with local community organizations to ensure underrepresented communities are included in the project.

6. Monitor and enforce commitments: To ensure that bidders follow through on their commitments related to economic development, workforce harmony, and DEI, 83C Round 4 should establish clear monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. These could include regular reporting requirements, audits, and penalties for non-compliance.
7. Leverage federal funding opportunities: The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) include significant funding opportunities for offshore wind projects that can be leveraged to maximize economic benefits to the Commonwealth, support workforce harmony, and advance goals for DEI. 83C Round 4 should encourage bidders to take advantage of these programs and require them to report on how they plan to use these funds to advance these goals.

a. Memorializing Commitments: In 83C Round 3, DOER executed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the selected projects to memorialize and track their commitments to economic development and DEI.2 Please provide any comments on these prior MOUs or other mechanisms to memorialize and track these commitments with selected projects.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) have been used in the past to track commitments made by selected offshore wind projects to support economic development and advance goals for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). While MOUs can be a useful tool for ensuring accountability and transparency, there are some considerations to keep in mind when designing them for 83C Round 4.

Firstly, it is important to ensure that the commitments being memorialized are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). This means that the commitments should be clear, quantifiable, realistic, aligned with the goals of the program, and have a set timeline for completion. Additionally, there should be a mechanism for reporting and verifying progress towards these commitments.

Secondly, there should be a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in the MOU, including the offshore wind project, the Department of Energy Resources (DOER), and any other relevant stakeholders. This includes defining the scope of the commitments and establishing accountability for meeting them.

Finally, there should be a mechanism for enforcement in case the commitments are not met. This could include penalties or other consequences for non-compliance. Additionally, it is important to have a plan in place for addressing any challenges that arise during the implementation of the commitments.

MOUs can be a valuable tool for tracking commitments made by offshore wind projects to support economic development and DEI goals. However, it is important to ensure that the commitments are SMART, that there is a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, and that there is a mechanism for enforcement in case of non-compliance.

8. Environmental Justice

How could 83C Round 4 be designed to best encourage project design and investments that avoid negative impacts on, and direct positive benefits of the project to, Environmental Justice (EJ) communities? Please refer in particular to Appendix J of 83C Round 3 and to the relevant provisions in Section 61 of An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind.

One way that 83C Round 4 could be designed to encourage project design and investments that avoid negative impacts on EJ communities and direct positive benefits of the project to these communities is to

establish a clear and comprehensive process for identifying and engaging with these communities throughout the project development process. This process should include robust community outreach and engagement efforts, such as public meetings, forums, and surveys, as well as the establishment of an advisory committee comprised of members from impacted communities.

In addition, 83C Round 4 could require project developers to conduct thorough Environmental Justice Analyses (EJAs) to assess potential negative impacts on EJ communities and to develop strategies to mitigate these impacts. The EJAs should be conducted in accordance with established best practices and guidelines, such as those set forth by the Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Technical Guidance.

To further encourage investments that provide direct positive benefits to EJ communities, 83C Round 4 could establish incentives for developers to include EJ communities in project planning, construction, and operations. For example, project developers could be required to establish partnerships with local community organizations to identify and address community needs, provide job training and apprenticeship programs for local residents, and establish local hiring goals for construction and operation of the project.

Finally, 83C Round 4 could establish clear and enforceable requirements for ongoing monitoring and reporting of project impacts on EJ communities. These requirements should include regular reporting of project benefits and impacts to EJ communities, as well as regular environmental and health monitoring to ensure that project impacts are identified and addressed in a timely manner.

By establishing a comprehensive process for identifying and engaging with EJ communities, requiring thorough EJAs, providing incentives for investments that provide direct benefits to these communities, and establishing clear monitoring and reporting requirements, 83C Round 4 can encourage project design and investments that avoid negative impacts on, and provide direct benefits to, EJ communities.

9. Environmental and Fisheries Impacts:

How could 83C Round 4 be designed to best encourage project designs that avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative impacts on the environment and fishing industry? Please refer in particular to Appendix J of 83C Round 3 and to the relevant provisions in Section 61 of An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind.

1. Early engagement with stakeholders: Early engagement with stakeholders, particularly environmental and fishing industry stakeholders, could help identify concerns and inform project designs to avoid or minimize potential negative impacts. This could include community-based participatory research and consultation processes, as well as meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities.

2. Data collection and analysis: Comprehensive data collection and analysis could help identify potential environmental and fisheries impacts and inform project designs. This could include detailed baseline studies of environmental and fisheries conditions, as well as ongoing monitoring during and after construction.

3. Site selection: Careful site selection could help avoid or minimize potential negative impacts on the environment and fisheries industry. This could include consideration of sensitive habitats, migration patterns of marine animals, and proximity to important fishing grounds.

4. Project design and construction: Project design and construction could be optimized to avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative impacts on the environment and fisheries industry. This could include the use of innovative technologies, such as lighter weight turbines, to reduce seabed impacts

and the use of experienced contractors who have demonstrated their ability to minimize environmental impacts.

5. Mitigation measures: Mitigation measures could be developed and implemented to minimize negative impacts on the environment and fisheries industry. This could include the use of artificial reefs to promote marine habitat, the use of sound attenuation measures to reduce noise impacts on marine animals, and the establishment of fisheries compensation programs to offset impacts on fishing grounds.

6. Ongoing monitoring and adaptive management: Ongoing monitoring and adaptive management could be used to ensure that project designs are effective at avoiding or minimizing negative impacts on the environment and fisheries industry. This could include the use of real-time monitoring technologies to track the movement of marine animals and the establishment of protocols for responding to unforeseen environmental or fisheries impacts.

10. Please provide any additional comments regarding implementation of the new provisions

in Section 61 of An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind in 83C Round 4

1. Workforce Development: In order to maximize the benefits of offshore wind energy development to the Commonwealth and its residents, it will be important to prioritize the development of a skilled and diverse workforce. This can be achieved through partnerships with labor unions, vocational schools, and community colleges, as well as through the establishment of apprenticeship programs and other workforce training initiatives. By prioritizing workforce development in 83C Round 4, Massachusetts can help to ensure that the jobs created by offshore wind energy development are accessible to a broad range of residents, including those from historically disadvantaged communities.

2. Economic Development: In addition to creating jobs, offshore wind energy development has the potential to generate significant economic benefits for the Commonwealth. In order to maximize these benefits, it will be important to encourage investments in local infrastructure, supply chain development, and other related industries. By prioritizing economic development in 83C Round 4, Massachusetts can help to ensure that the benefits of offshore wind energy development are spread throughout the Commonwealth, including in historically disadvantaged communities.

3. Environmental Justice: Offshore wind energy development has the potential to generate significant environmental benefits, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the promotion of renewable energy. However, it is also important to ensure that the development of offshore wind energy does not disproportionately impact Environmental Justice (EJ) communities. In order to address this concern, it will be important to carefully consider the potential environmental and social impacts of offshore wind energy development, and to work with EJ communities to identify and address any concerns they may have. By prioritizing environmental justice in 83C Round 4, Massachusetts can help to ensure that the benefits of offshore wind energy development are equitably distributed throughout the Commonwealth.

4. Fisheries Impacts: Offshore wind energy development has the potential to impact the fishing industry, which is an important economic driver in many coastal communities in Massachusetts. In order to minimize these impacts, it will be important to work closely with fishermen and other stakeholders to identify potential areas of conflict, and to develop strategies to mitigate these impacts.

By prioritizing the needs of the fishing industry in 83C Round 4, Massachusetts can help to ensure that the benefits of offshore wind energy development are achieved in a manner that is consistent with the long-term sustainability of the region's fisheries.

The new provisions in Section 61 of An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind represent an important step forward in the development of offshore wind energy in Massachusetts. By carefully considering the needs of the Commonwealth's residents, workers, and environment, and by working closely with stakeholders to identify and address potential areas of conflict, Massachusetts can help to ensure that the benefits of offshore wind energy development are realized in a manner that is consistent with the long-term sustainability and well-being of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Dylan Gust

Daniel Bettinger

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CEO, Co-Founder

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