

PRESS RELEASE

Protect Our Coast NJ: Supports Cape May County Resolution Opposing Offshore Wind Development; calls on the Governor to be honest and oppose Offshore Wind Development.

Ocean City, New Jersey—POCNJ, an independent, non-partisan, grassroots group, congratulated Cape May County Board of Commissioners for passing a critically important resolution opposing Offshore Wind Projects.

In its findings, the County Commissioners pointed out that in 2018 Governor Murphy joined in a federal lawsuit seeking an injunction against oil companies' surveying activities similar to what is currently being conducted by Orsted to prevent the injury or deaths of whales, dolphins, and porpoises. In its resolution, the County officials cited the lawsuit where the Governor alleged that "Whales, dolphins, and porpoises have finely tuned senses of hearing, on which they rely to navigate, seek food, avoid danger, and communicate among themselves. Many species of these animals are vulnerable to human activities."

The County resolution goes further in citing the lawsuit that "seismic testing activities at issue here will harm [New Jersey] and [its] citizens. They will harass marine mammals, and other wildlife that commonly move between federal and state waters, including the waters of [New Jersey]. Further, seismic testing's negative impact on marine mammals' health and abundance will make [New Jersey] less attractive for coastal tourism, will deprive [New Jersey] of tax revenues associated with coastal tourism, and could create cascading effects on the [New Jersey's] economically important commercial and recreational fishing industries."

The Commissioners in passing the resolution also recited the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) comments about the limited positive impact offshore wind development on the East Coast will have on global warming:

"...it is anticipated that there would be no collective impact on global warming as a result of offshore wind projects...though they may beneficially contribute to a broader combination of actions to reduce future impacts of climate change."

Harvard University researchers also determined that building scores of wind turbines in a concentrated area will actually raise surface temperatures, especially in the immediate area of the turbines. They state further that wind power would actually have more climate impact than coal or gas within a ten-year horizon.

The Commissioners unanimously passed the resolution with one member absent.

POCNJ opposes Offshore Wind development because of its impact on electricity rates, tourism, national security, foreign interests, rights of home rule, fishing, property values, and environmental impact. Whether it is offshore wind development or oil companies surveying the ocean floor, we live in a critically fragile area that must be protected. POCNJ is concerned with the unprecedented rate of recent deaths of whales, dolphins as well as the impact on the migratory birds and horseshoe crabs. Currently, there are only 343 North Atlantic Right Whales in existence. Moving forward with these developments will only cause this species to become extinct.

POCNJ opposes offshore wind development that will only increase electricity rates for intermittent generation. "Why buy something that will increase rates by 3-4 times, that can only be used at best half the time, if the wind is blowing," Suzanne Hornick, President, POCNJ, stated.

Hornick called on the Governor to be honest and live up to his previous position about the impact surveying has on the ocean environment and marine animals. "It doesn't matter if it is oil companies or offshore wind companies killing our environment, it should be prohibited." Hornick commented that the 343 North Atlantic Whales are a species important to save and protect for our future. "If the Governor is honest, he would oppose offshore wind development because of its negative impact to our ocean environment and sea creatures, especially in light of no impact on reducing global warming," Hornick says. "Governor Phil Murphy surreptitiously took away the rights of individual New Jerseyans to determine what is best for our own communities to further his ineffectual agenda of offshore wind development at taxpayers' expense. That is un-American!"