

From: [Ben Hellerstein](#)
To: [Paul Foley](#)
Cc: [Lucy Morrison](#)
Subject: letter in support of Vineyard Wind
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2019 6:38:27 PM

Dear Paul,

I am writing in support of the proposed Vineyard Wind project. I understand that the undersea cable serving this project will be discussed at the Martha's Vineyard Commission meeting tonight.

The Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center is dedicated to protecting Massachusetts' air, water, and open spaces. We investigate problems, craft solutions, educate the public and decision-makers, and help Bay Staters make their voices heard in local, state, and national debates over the quality of our environment and our lives.

We support the use of our offshore wind resources to provide limitless, pollution-free energy for Massachusetts and other East Coast states.

In Massachusetts, offshore wind is the largest renewable energy resource we have. Last March, we released a report, [*Wind Power to Spare: The Enormous Energy Potential of Atlantic Offshore Wind*](#), documenting the potential for offshore wind energy along the Atlantic coast. Our report found that Massachusetts has the highest offshore wind potential of any state in the nation. Massachusetts' technical potential for offshore wind is equivalent to more than 19 times the state's annual electricity consumption. Even if our heating and transportation are converted to electric power — a trend that is already underway, and a necessary step toward decarbonizing our economy and preventing the worst impacts of global warming — offshore wind will still be sufficient to power Massachusetts eight times over. I have included a copy of the report along with these comments.

Massachusetts' offshore wind resources, along with our potential for other forms of renewable energy like solar, give us confidence that a future powered by 100 percent clean, renewable energy is feasible. When we achieve 100 percent renewable energy, our air will be cleaner, our communities will be healthier, and we'll be doing our part to avoid devastating climate change.

In Massachusetts, public support for clean energy is strong, and state and local officials are responding to this support with ambitious commitments. In 2016, state officials passed a law committing to 1,600 megawatts of offshore wind energy within 10 years. Two years later, legislators opened the door to doubling that commitment to 3,200 megawatts, and Governor Baker promised he would do so.

Once completed, the Vineyard Wind project will produce approximately 6 percent of the electricity consumed in Massachusetts while avoiding 1.6 million tons of carbon dioxide annually, the equivalent of taking 325,000 cars off the road. The project will also result in a significant reduction in other pollutants, like nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide, that harm public health.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) specifically examined the impacts of sediment suspension and electromagnetic frequencies,

among other potential impacts resulting from the installation and operation of the undersea cable. The report concluded that any negative impacts resulting from the undersea cable are expected to be minor.

Vineyard Wind has shown a commitment to building a cooperative relationship with the project's host communities. Vineyard Wind is partnering with Vineyard Power, an energy cooperative, to ensure that residents of Martha's Vineyard experience the economic benefits of offshore wind. The company has also committed to significant investments in renewable energy and resiliency in communities throughout Southeastern Massachusetts.

In conclusion, I ask you to do everything in your power to advance the development of the Vineyard Wind project as the first major step toward tapping into the tremendous offshore wind potential of the Atlantic coast. This project is a key component of the clean, healthy, renewable future that Massachusetts deserves.

Sincerely,

Ben Hellerstein
State Director
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