



TOWN OF OCEAN CITY

The White Marlin Capital of the World

March 6, 2023

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
The Honorable Senator Brian J. Feldman
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: SB781 - Offshore Wind Energy – State Goals and Procurement
(Promoting Offshore Wind Energy Resources Act)**

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

On behalf of the Ocean City Mayor and City Council, I am respectfully requesting that the Committee return an unfavorable report on SB781. One of the primary goals of this bill is the use of Maryland Ratepayer funds to expand and extend the electric transmission system to support offshore wind. The bill specifically mentions “Allow future transmission lines to connect in a meshed manner and share landing points” and then goes on to state “extending the existing transmission grid to be closer to offshore wind energy locations”.

While we support clean energy and the jobs this industry can bring to Maryland, Ocean City has been on record opposing industrial scale offshore wind development within view of our shoreline since 2017. We have repeatedly warned that these projects will destroy our view shed, negatively impact our property values, and drive tourists and property owners to other destinations such as Virginia Beach and the Outer Banks where offshore wind is developed far enough offshore to not be visible. Unfortunately, our concerns regarding these issues continue to be ignored, even as the size of the turbines have grown from 300’ tall to almost 1,000’. Now this bill threatens to potentially add massive high voltage power lines and dangerous cable landfalls in our Town.

Proponents of offshore wind continually reference the Block Island Project as a positive model for this type of development. I would urge the committee to investigate the consequences of the cable landfalls on Block Island. Underground high voltage electric cables were installed so poorly that that in less than a year they were exposed on the beach. This resulted in beach closures, power outages, shutting down production from the offshore wind factory, and cable repairs that took over five years and cost Rhode Island utility customers \$31 million.

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Ocean City has spent millions of dollars over the years to underground utilities to lessen their impact on our view shed and we continue to pursue undergrounding projects to this day. This bill threatens to undue all those efforts by subsidizing and encouraging the construction of electric transmission lines and other industrial gear in Ocean City. Do not turn Maryland's only coastal beach town into a giant power station, please issue an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 781.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard W. Meehan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Richard W. Meehan
Mayor