



March 7, 2023

Senator Brian J. Feldman
Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21201

Senate Bill 781- Offshore Wind Energy-State Goals and Procurement (Promoting Offshore Wind Energy Resources Act).

Good afternoon,

My name is Teara Strum, Chief Executive Officer of Strum Contracting Company, a small minority owned, full-service welding and fabrication firm that has been operating in the state since 1987.

I want to thank Senators Feldman, Hester, Brooks and fellow members of the Maryland Senate, Education, Energy and the Environment Committee for the opportunity to speak with you today about Senate Bill 781.

I am here today to express Strum Contracting Company's strong support for SB 781, Offshore Wind Energy-State Goals and Procurement (Promoting Offshore Wind Energy Resources Act) to increase the state's renewable energy portfolio from 2.5 megawatts to 8.5 megawatts of offshore wind power by 2031. To facilitate the construction of a shared transmission infrastructure and to strengthen labor standards for manufacturing, construction, installation and maintenance for all future offshore wind projects.

The American offshore wind industry is growing rapidly, other states across the eastern seaboard; more specifically states that are included in the SMART-POWER Agreement such as Virginia (2.6 GW) and North Carolina (5.5 MW); are further ahead of Maryland with their development. If we want to stay competitive as a state and as a local economy, we need to increase our goal. SB 781 does just that. While taking into consideration and finding solutions for our current state transmission facilities, incorporating labor standards and ensuring these projects are equitable and attainable opportunities for Small, Minority and Women owned businesses throughout the state of Maryland, our goal will be attained.

As a state-certified MBE with a 30+ year history of providing steel fabricating and welding services in the heavy civil industry, SCC has been able to transition fluidly into the offshore wind industry while creating JOBS and partnerships with local non-profits. In 2018, we entered a professional services contract with US Wind as owner's representatives for the fabrication of the



Meteorological Mass Tower (MMT) in Houma, LA while ensuring “Maryland content” from the beginning of its contracted commitments under the OREC. While this engagement worked to create a new silo of performance for our small company, our larger opportunity followed by our selection as a subcontractor to Tradepoint Atlantic Marine Development Corporation (TPMD).

In May 2019 TPMD contracted SCC to be its provider (supplier) and welding of 2,010 H-Pile steel beams, measuring 14x117x80’. These beams were a critical component for the reconstruction of inner berths and piers sufficient to support the weight of the wind turbine components to be manufactured at TPA, and subsequently barged down to Ocean City for installation.

Strum Contracting, has already experienced business growth as one of the first MBE in the country to be awarded a construction service-related contract specific to OSW, by when we were able to create full time equivalent jobs for this project. Moreover, Strum Contracting partners with Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC Baltimore) to fill positions with graduates from this workforce development non-profit. All hires were residents of Baltimore City and or Baltimore County and they were able to earn a livable hourly wage on average of \$28.18 base and \$15.50 fringe that covered healthcare plan. Contribute to a qualified retirement fund, paid time off and receive on the job training and other benefits, while creating a career ladder with upward mobility to gain additional industry credentials.

However, long term job creation and the sustainability of good wage jobs will not be possible if we do not take a step back and focus on one of the biggest challenges currently facing the American offshore wind industry. In order to remain competitive with states such as New York and New Jersey whose offshore wind power is 9 MW & 7.5 MW respectively, we must take the first step. Currently, Maryland does not have the capacity to house 8.5 MW of offshore wind power. SB 781 addresses this issue by first step in addressing one of the biggest challenges of getting offshore power on to its shores, by legislating the public service commission to conduct an analysis of Maryland’s current transmission system expansion options. This is a major first step in solidifying the expansion of this emerging industry. By addressing the transmission system, we will be able to successfully expand the states capacity by building out our current lease areas and protecting the states opportunities for clean energy jobs locally and regionally.

Thank you,

Teaera Strum

Teaera R. Strum,
Chief Executive Officer