

§3407. Maine Offshore Wind Renewable Energy and Economic Development Program

1. Program established. The Maine Offshore Wind Renewable Energy and Economic Development Program, referred to in this section as "the program," is established to further the development and use of offshore wind power projects in the Gulf of Maine. The office, in collaboration with the commission, shall administer the program in accordance with this section and shall ensure that the program is designed to advance the greenhouse gas emissions reduction obligations and climate policies of this State under Title 38, section 576-A and Title 38, section 577, the renewable energy goals established in section 3210, subsection 1-A and all applicable workforce development efforts of this State. Under the program, the office, in collaboration with the commission, shall:

- A. Encourage the responsible development of offshore wind power projects to stabilize energy supply prices, reduce this State's reliance on imported fossil fuels, realize direct and near-term economic benefits for the people of this State and ensure the achievement of this State's wind energy generation goal established in section 3404, subsection 2; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]
- B. Support offshore wind power projects that result in long-term, family-supporting careers, including for disadvantaged populations and communities; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]
- C. Support responsibly sited and operated offshore wind power projects that avoid or minimize and compensate for impacts to wildlife, habitat, fisheries and coastal communities in the Gulf of Maine; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]
- D. Support efforts to increase understanding of impacts of offshore wind power projects on the marine environment and to advance research to better understand how offshore wind power projects can coexist with minimal impact to existing ocean users, wildlife, fisheries and the marine environment; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]
- E. Promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the development of offshore wind power projects with particular consideration given to the energy and economic circumstances and opportunities in coastal and socially vulnerable communities and for the federally recognized Indian tribes in this State. For the purposes of this paragraph, "socially vulnerable communities" means those communities containing populations that are disproportionately burdened by existing social inequities or lack the capacity to withstand new or worsening burdens; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]
- F. Support the advancement of port infrastructure, local offshore wind power-related economic development and the development of a supply chain to support the development of offshore wind power projects; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]
- G. Support the development and deployment of innovative technologies to achieve the energy policy and economic development objectives of this State, including energy storage; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]
- H. Support the use of Maine-based technical and engineering expertise and build on this State's leadership in offshore wind power, maritime industries and research and development; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]
- I. Support the development of transmission infrastructure necessary for this State to expeditiously meet its renewable energy and climate goals, including advancing the development of shared or regional offshore wind power transmission infrastructure; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]
- J. Collaborate with other states or entities when appropriate on regional issues, including, but not limited to, transmission, procurement, supply chain and workforce development and research and monitoring relating to wildlife, fisheries and the Gulf of Maine ecosystem; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

K. Support responsibly sited offshore wind power projects with generation facilities located in areas outside of the area of the Gulf of Maine where the majority of lobster fishing or other significant commercial fishing occurs; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

L. Coordinate the activities of state agencies that are affected by the development of offshore wind power projects, including, but not limited to, the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Department of Labor, the Department of Marine Resources, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Environmental Protection; and [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

M. Support the development of deep-water offshore wind power projects and transmission infrastructure in the Gulf of Maine that serve the public interest by advancing the renewable energy and climate policies and economic development goals of this State and helping to reduce energy price volatility. [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

[PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

2. Federal lease stipulations. The office, in consultation with other state agencies, including, but not limited to, the Department of Marine Resources, shall advocate for the inclusion in any leases issued by a federal agency for offshore wind energy production in federal waters provisions that will:

A. Support economic development, including the development of port infrastructure; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

B. Promote public communications plans about the leased activity; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

C. Ensure appropriate engagement with federally recognized Indian tribes in this State; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

D. Include adequate transmission planning; [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

E. Result in access to research conducted in connection with the lease; and [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

F. Maximize mitigation of and compensation for impacts to coastal communities, wildlife, fisheries and the marine environment. [PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

[PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2023, c. 481, §5 (NEW).

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