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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-2107

November 9, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar,

As you know, next month the United Nations Climate Change Conference will convene in Copenhagen, Denmark. As the leading emitter of carbon pollution, the United States must take a leadership role within the international community. Approving the Cape Wind project as the nation's first commercial offshore wind project before the start of the U.N. conference would send a strong message to international negotiators about the United States' commitment to developing sources of clean energy and reducing global warming pollution. Therefore, I urge you to complete the review of the Cape Wind project and issue a final decision before the commencement of the U.N. Climate Change Conference on December 7, 2009.

I strongly support the development of clean, renewable energy, and I believe that wind projects both onshore and offshore hold tremendous promise for our nation and for New England. Indeed, your Department has estimated that there is 1 million megawatts of wind energy potential off the East Coast. Approving the Cape Wind project will allow the United States to begin harnessing this tremendous potential off our shores.

The environmental review process is the bedrock on which valuable and safe energy projects are built. Over the last few years, the Interior Department has undertaken an exhaustive review of the environmental impact of the proposed Cape Wind Project. Since this proposal was the first offshore wind turbine development to be proposed for the U.S. coastline, I thought it was vitally important that the environmental review be done correctly. Now that the project has passed its environmental review successfully and the Department is currently undertaking its final consultations with key stakeholders, I believe the time has come to move forward with the Cape Wind project so that we can unleash the promise of this and other offshore renewable projects.


The Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, which I chair, has held numerous hearings focusing on the promise that wind power holds for meeting America's future electricity needs. In addition, by passing the 2007 energy bill, the clean energy provisions included in the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, and the Waxman-Markey American Clean Energy and Security Act, which passed the House in

June, the Democratic Congress and President Obama have demonstrated their commitment to moving America towards clean energy technologies like wind.

I commend your dedication to developing renewable energy and applaud you for finalizing the regulations for all offshore renewable energy projects on which the Bush administration had dragged its feet for more than three years. With the Obama administration's initiatives and the additional clean energy legislation currently pending before Congress, the tide has turned from the near total focus on fossil fuel extraction towards a comprehensive plan that includes the clean energy promise of the winds and the tides. Approving the Cape Wind project would be another important step towards a clean energy future.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress