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June 29, 2016

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
Executive Chamber
New York State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

On behalf of the local, state, and national organizations signed below – representing hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers – we urge you to make a strong commitment to a long-term, large-scale, megawatt-certain offshore wind power program for New York. New Yorkers know too well that climate change impacts our coastal and low-lying communities. To protect our health, wildlife, economy, and the quality of life of future generations, we must reduce pollution and launch a new clean energy chapter for New York.

We appreciate your commitment to tackling climate change by setting a 2030 goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent, producing 50 percent of the state's electricity from renewable energy, and cutting energy consumption in buildings by 23 percent. While there is much more that must be done, these programs and policies – along with the Reforming the Energy Vision

process and development of the Clean Energy Fund – are great steps in the right direction that will help position New York as a national renewable energy leader. We urge you to finalize a “50 by 30” Clean Energy Standard without further delay and ensure that offshore wind power plays a major role in meeting these important climate and clean energy targets.

Recognizing that offshore wind power is critical for meeting New York’s 50% renewable energy goal, we applaud New York State Energy and Research Authority’s (NYSERDA) recent leadership on this massive clean energy opportunity. By announcing its intent to bid in the upcoming federal offshore wind lease auction, NYSERDA has signaled a strong interest in moving an offshore wind project forward. This is an important first step toward building the long-term, large-scale offshore wind program needed to maximize the potential for clean energy development off our shores.

New York has a world class wind resource far off our shores that can deliver clean, reliable power right where we need it. Offshore wind has tremendous potential to deliver utility-scale, locally-sourced renewable power to New York families and businesses. Offshore wind blows the strongest during times of peak demand – afternoons, winter cold snaps, and summer heat waves – and can diversify our energy mix with large amounts of valuable, clean power when we need it most. Reducing pollution throughout New York helps protect the most vulnerable among us, including children, the elderly, and low-income communities.

Countries around the world are already reaping the many economic and environmental benefits of offshore wind power. In Europe, this booming industry currently supports 75,000 long-term, quality jobs in both coastal and inland communities. This incredible economic development story can be replicated here in New York, creating thousands of jobs across a range of high tech, manufacturing, construction, and operations sectors. The U.S. is poised to benefit from more than 25 years of lessons learned across the Atlantic, including technology advancements that have lowered costs and enabled development in areas far offshore where stronger wind resources can deliver even greater environmental and economic benefits.

Recent progress by the federal Department of the Interior in advancing the offshore wind leasing process for New York underscores the need to take action now to seize this opportunity. With a large area already leased for offshore wind development far off the East End of Long Island, a newly designated area off the Rockaways on track for a lease auction this year, and a process currently underway to identify additional areas for development off of Long Island, now is the time for New York to make a firm commitment to offshore wind power that ensures the market certainty needed to drive projects forward in these areas.

We call on you to commit to the following actions to finally launch offshore wind power for New York:

- **Commit within the Clean Energy Standard to a long-term, large-scale offshore wind program of at least 5,000 megawatts by 2025 that establishes the certainty, longevity, and scale needed to launch this new clean energy industry.**
- **Capitalize on near-term opportunities to advance offshore wind projects off Long Island and New York City.**

- **Ensure an efficient, transparent, and environmentally responsible offshore wind leasing process that protects wildlife.**
- **Invest in key research, initiatives, and infrastructure needed to spur offshore wind development.**

New York’s citizens are depending on you for bold leadership to ensure a clean energy future. New York has much to gain from harnessing our offshore wind power potential in a manner that protects wildlife and their habitats throughout every stage of development. We thank you for your consideration of this promising clean energy solution, and we look forward to working with you to develop a successful strategy to bring this transformational new power source online.

Sincerely,

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CC:

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