



TESTIMONY AS GENERAL COMMENTS FOR SB 63
AAC THE MITIGATION OF EFFECTS ON WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES FROM
FUTURE OFFSHORE WIND PROJECTS
January 29, 2025

To: Co-Chairs Sen. Lopes and Rep. Parker, and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

From: Connor Yakaitis, Deputy Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

Thank you for the opportunity to submit general comments regarding SB 63. The Connecticut League of Conservation Voters (CTLCV) is dedicated to advocating for strong environmental policies that promote clean energy, sustainability, and climate action. For years, we have been steadfast supporters of offshore wind energy as a key component of Connecticut's transition to a cleaner and more resilient energy future.

As the impacts of climate change accelerate—bringing more extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and increasing temperatures—we must take bold and decisive action to reduce carbon emissions. Connecticut has set ambitious climate goals, including achieving zero carbon emissions in the electricity sector by 2040. To meet these targets, we must rapidly scale up our investment in renewable energy sources, and offshore wind stands out as one of the most viable and scalable solutions.

Offshore wind provides a clean, reliable, and abundant energy source that can deliver the large quantities of electricity needed to support our growing demand. Unlike fossil fuels, offshore wind produces zero greenhouse gas emissions, helping to mitigate the effects of climate change and reduce our dependence on polluting energy sources. Furthermore, offshore wind turbines generate the most power during winter months, when electricity demand for heating is at its highest, making it a crucial solution for ensuring grid reliability and energy security.

Over the past few years, Connecticut has made significant financial and infrastructural investments to support offshore wind development. Most notably, the state has allocated hundreds of millions of dollars to modernize and redevelop the State Pier in New London, transforming it into a cutting-edge marshalling port for offshore wind projects. This investment has not only strengthened Connecticut's position as a leader in offshore wind development but has also created new economic opportunities by attracting developers and related industries to the region. Several major offshore wind projects are currently in progress that will provide clean, carbon-free electricity to Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, reinforcing our commitment to regional collaboration in the transition to renewable energy.

While CTLCV strongly supports offshore wind development, we recognize the importance of implementing proper mitigation measures to protect wildlife and the

environment. Offshore wind developers have incorporated numerous strategies to minimize habitat disturbance and reduce potential impacts on marine ecosystems. One such strategy is the use of bubble curtains—an innovative technology that dampens noise pollution during construction, thereby minimizing disturbances to marine life, particularly whales and other sensitive species. We applaud the proactive efforts of offshore wind developers to prioritize environmental stewardship, and we support continued research and implementation of best practices to further mitigate any potential ecological impacts.

However, despite the undeniable benefits of offshore wind, there has been an increase in well-funded disinformation campaigns designed to delay or obstruct these critical projects. A [2023 report](#) from Brown University’s Climate and Development Lab highlights the strong connections between these opposition campaigns and the fossil fuel industry, which seeks to maintain its dominance by undermining renewable energy initiatives. These deceptive tactics sow confusion and create unnecessary roadblocks, hindering the progress we need to make in addressing the climate crisis. Furthermore, President Trump’s recent Executive Action pausing future offshore wind development presents yet another obstacle, adding uncertainty at a time when we need unwavering commitment to clean energy solutions. It is essential that we work together to counteract misinformation, advocate for evidence-based policy decisions, and remove unnecessary barriers that could jeopardize current and future offshore wind projects.

In addition to its environmental benefits, offshore wind plays a significant role in strengthening Connecticut’s economy. The development of offshore wind projects has created well-paying, sustainable job opportunities across the state, particularly in the shoreline region. From manufacturing and construction to maintenance and port operations, offshore wind has the potential to support a thriving green economy while providing workers with stable employment and competitive wages. Investing in offshore wind is not only an investment in our energy future but also an investment in economic growth and workforce development.

As Connecticut and the broader New England region work toward transitioning the ISO grid to a renewable energy-based system, we urge this committee to continue supporting offshore wind development. At the same time, it is crucial that we maintain strong environmental and wildlife protections to ensure that these projects are developed responsibly and sustainably. By balancing clean energy expansion with ecological stewardship, we can achieve a future that is both environmentally sound and economically prosperous.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your commitment to advancing policies that support clean energy, reduce carbon emissions, and protect Connecticut’s natural resources. We look forward to working together to ensure that offshore wind remains a key pillar of our state’s energy strategy.

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