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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS -- OFFSHORE WIND PROCUREMENT POLICY STUDY COMMISSION

Introduced By: Representatives Handy, Fogarty, Tanzi, Ajello, Shallcross Smith, and Cortvriend

Date Introduced: February 12, 2026

Referred To: House Corporations

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 39 of the General Laws entitled "PUBLIC UTILITIES AND
2 CARRIERS" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

CHAPTER 36

OFFSHORE WIND PROCUREMENT POLICY STUDY COMMISSION

39-36-1. Purpose.

6 The purpose of this chapter is to establish a study commission to evaluate policies and
7 procurement structures necessary to support the long-term development of offshore wind in Rhode
8 Island, with the goal of procuring one thousand two hundred megawatts (1,200 MW) of offshore
9 wind capacity by the year 2030 in a manner that is cost-effective, reliable, and consistent with the
10 state's climate and economic development goals, including high-quality job creation and workforce
11 standards.

39-36-2. Establishment of commission.

13 (a) There is hereby established the offshore wind procurement policy study commission
14 (the “commission”).

17 39-36-3. Membership.

18 The fifteen (15) member commission shall consist of the following members:

1 (1) One member of the Rhode Island house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of
2 the house;
3 (2) One member of the Rhode Island senate, appointed by the president of the senate;
4 (3) The commissioner of the Rhode Island office of energy resources, or designee;
5 (4) The chair of the public utilities commission, or designee;
6 (5) The director of the department of environmental management, or designee;
7 (6) One representative of Rhode Island Energy, appointed by Rhode Island Energy;
8 (7) Two (2) representatives of an environmental or climate advocacy organization,
9 appointed by the environment council of Rhode Island;
10 (8) Two (2) representatives from organized labor having relevant experience in
11 construction and workforce standard implementation, appointed by the president of the Rhode
12 Island AFL-CIO;
13 (9) One representative of a ratepayers or consumer advocacy organization, appointed by
14 the governor;
15 (10) One expert in offshore wind development, finance, or supply chain activities,
16 appointed by the governor;
17 (11) One academic professional in offshore wind energy, appointed by the governor;
18 (12) One expert in electric grid planning or electric transmission, appointed by the
19 governor; and
20 (13) One representative of a community-based environmental justice organization,
21 appointed by the governor.

39-36-4. Duties.

23 The commission shall study and make recommendations on:

24 (1) Offshore wind procurement authority, including whether procurement should remain
25 with Rhode Island Energy or be transferred to the Rhode Island office of energy resources or
26 another state entity;

27 (2) Procurement evaluation criteria including, but not limited to, price stability, cost
28 containment, reliability, high-quality job creation, workforce development, and environmental and
29 economic benefits;

30 (3) Multi-state or regional procurement structures and coordination with ISO-NE states;

31 (4) Contract pricing and flexibility mechanisms that respond to changing market conditions
32 while protecting ratepayers and ensuring project viability;

(5) Identify onshore infrastructure and workforce development needs, including ports,

34 transmission, and manufacturing capacity, and make recommendations to ensure Rhode Island has

1 the grid capacity to support offshore wind energy procurements;
2 (6) Identify workforce development needs and opportunities including, but not limited to,
3 registered apprenticeship utilization, local hire pathways, and supply-chain workforce needs, and
4 make recommendations to ensure Rhode Island has a strong workforce pipeline to support offshore
5 wind projects and related economic development, while promoting family-sustaining careers in the
6 offshore wind industry; and
7 (7) A strategic pathway for Rhode Island to procure one thousand two hundred megawatts
8 (1,200 MW) of offshore wind by year 2030.

9 **39-36-5. Reporting.**

10 The commission shall submit an annual report to the governor and the general assembly
11 detailing findings, recommendations, and progress toward offshore wind procurement goals. The
12 first report shall be due by October 30, 2027.

13 **39-36-6. Organization and decision-making.**

14 (a) The commission shall elect a chair and vice chair from among its members at its first
15 meeting.

16 (b) A majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the
17 transaction of business.

18 (c) The commission shall take official action, adopt findings, or approve recommendations
19 only when a quorum is present, and only by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members
20 present and voting.

21 (d) The commission may establish subcommittees or working groups to support its work;
22 provided that, any findings or recommendations of any subcommittee or working group shall be
23 advisory only unless adopted by the commission pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

24 **39-36-7. Rulemaking based on commission findings.**

25 (a) Within one hundred eighty (180) days of the submission of the commission's first
26 annual report pursuant to this chapter, the Rhode Island office of energy resources ("OER") shall
27 initiate a rulemaking or regulations process to implement any recommendations of the commission
28 that require regulatory action.

29 (b) The rulemaking shall include, at a minimum, the development of rules and regulations
30 establishing any necessary procurement structures, evaluation criteria, labor and workforce
31 standards, and contract pricing mechanisms identified by the commission to support the state's
32 strategic pathway to procure one thousand two hundred megawatts (1,200 MW) of offshore wind
33 by year 2030.

34 (c) If OER determines that one or more commission recommendations cannot be

1 implemented through rulemaking, regulation or are not in the public interest, OER shall submit a
2 written explanation to the governor and the general assembly detailing the reasons for such
3 determination.

4 **39-36-8. Commission appointments.**

5 The commission seats shall be appointed by September 30, 2026, and the first meeting of
6 the commission shall take place by October 30, 2026.

7 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS -- OFFSHORE WIND
PROCUREMENT POLICY STUDY COMMISSION

- 1 This act would establish the offshore wind procurement policy study commission. This
- 2 commission would evaluate policies and procurement structures necessary to support the long-term
- 3 development of offshore wind in Rhode Island. The commission would meet at least bi-monthly
- 4 and sunset on December 31, 2030, unless extended by the general assembly.
- 5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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