

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

August 29, 2025

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

Dear Mr. Burgum,

I write regarding the Trump Administration's recent troubling actions to impede previously permitted and approved wind energy projects, putting at risk thousands of U.S. jobs along with billions in investment into solutions proven to lower energy costs for millions of Americans. These seemingly arbitrary decisions have occurred in the wake of President Trump and Congressional Republicans receiving almost half a billion dollars in campaign contributions from oil companies in the last campaign cycle.¹ It is critical that the American people know whether thinly veiled corruption is leading to soaring energy costs and worsening the climate crisis. Pursuant to Senate Rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate and Senate Resolution 94 (119th Cong.), Section 12, I write to request information and records detailing how the Department of the Interior (DOI) has made recent decisions to issue these stop-work orders.

Misguided shutdowns of wind power projects will raise electricity prices, likely making electricity far less affordable for families and businesses, eliminate thousands of jobs, and drastically impede economic growth. Officials' flimsy, fact free rationale — vague allusions to supposed "national security" concerns — seem ludicrous in light of previous approvals by agencies that have responsibility for such issues. The last four months have seen the Trump Administration cancel clean energy projects under a host of questionable circumstances while providing only the flimsiest of rationales. Most recently, on Friday, August 22, 2025, DOI issued a stop-work order on Revolution Wind, a \$4 billion offshore wind project off the coast of Rhode Island that supported 2,500 US jobs, would provide power to 350,000 homes in Rhode Island and Connecticut, and was 80% complete.² The Trump Administration offered vague and nonspecific national security

¹ Dharna Noor, *Big oil spent \$445m in last election cycle to influence Trump and Congress, report says*, THE GUARDIAN (Jan. 23, 2025), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jan/23/big-oil-445m-trump-congress>.

² Adam Whittaker and Elena Vardon, *Orsted Shares Tumble After U.S. Issues Stop-Work Order on Wind Project*, W.S.J. (Aug. 25, 2025), <https://www.wsj.com/business/energy-oil/orsted-subsiadiary-gets-order-to-stop-work-on-u-s-offshore-wind-farm-3df01b7b>; Lisa Friedman, Brad Plumer & Maxine Joselow, *Trump Administration Orders Work Halted on Wind Farm That Is Nearly Built*, N.Y.T. (Aug. 22, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/22/climate/trump-administration-halts-revolution-wind.html>; Gordon Ebanks,

concerns as the rationale for this action.³ Similarly, in April 2025 the Trump Administration issued a stop-work order against Empire Wind, a \$5 billion wind project off the coast of New York, while citing only vague environmental concerns following a report from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (“NOAA”).⁴ However, recent reporting uncovered that DOI began drafting the stop-work order prior to receiving the report from NOAA.⁵ Most recently, in the case of the Maryland Offshore Wind Project, which would power over 700,000 homes, the Trump administration filed court proceedings on August 22, 2025, demonstrating their intention to withdraw approval for the project while providing no rationale whatsoever.⁶

These confounding actions occurred even though wind energy will be critical to meeting America’s booming energy needs in the years ahead. The Trump Administration’s own Department of Energy forecasted in May 2025 that electricity consumption would reach an all-time high in 2025 and 2026 and that renewable energy production would grow significantly faster than all other sources to meet these demands.⁷ In fact, as renewable energy has grown to meet the electricity needs of millions of Americans, wind and solar power have become cheaper to build and operate than natural gas.⁸

The interference in each of the actions taken against wind projects by the Trump Administration appears to be merely the latest step in the Republican Party’s continuing war on renewable energy. President Trump frequently refers to wind energy as the “greatest scam in history.”⁹ This evidence-free policy preference has apparently been reflected in DOI policy, including the July 2025 announcements that the DOI Office of the Secretary would have “final review” of all “decisions, actions, consultations, and other undertakings... related to wind and solar” on federal land or requiring approval by DOI,¹⁰ and that DOI was “ending special treatment”

Canceled wind project puts thousands of jobs at risk, CNN (Aug. 26, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/08/26/business/wind-project-cancel-trump-jobs>.

³ Isabella O’Malley, *Trump halts work on New England offshore wind project that’s nearly complete*, A.P. (Aug. 23, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/offshore-revolution-wind-project-stopped-trump-33214b9efb8f3f7a98c58299581bff9f>.

⁴ Lisa Friedman, Brad Plumer, and Maxine Joselow, *Trump Administration Orders Work Halted on Wind Farm That Is Nearly Built*, N.Y.T. (Aug. 22, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/22/climate/trump-administration-halts-revolution-wind.html>.

⁵ Ian Stevenson and Benjamin Storrow, *Internal emails reveal Interior’s Empire Wind deliberations*, E&E NEWS (Aug. 28, 2025), <https://www.eenews.net/articles/internal-emails-reveal-interiors-empire-wind-deliberations/>.

⁶ Rachel Frazin, *Trump plans to cancel another offshore wind project*, THE HILL (Aug. 26, 2025), <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/5470888-donald-trump-targets-maryland-wind-project/>.

⁷ Today in Energy, U.S. ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION (May 13, 2025), <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=65264>.

⁸ *Levelized Costs of New Generation Resources in the Annual Energy Outlook 2023*, U.S. ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION (Apr. 2023), https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/aeo/electricity_generation/pdf/AEO2023_LCOE_report.pdf.

⁹ Jason Plautz, *What Trump’s Treasury pick means for clean energy tax credits*, E&E NEWS (Nov. 25, 2024), <https://www.eenews.net/articles/what-trumps-treasury-pick-means-for-clean-energy-tax-credits/>.

¹⁰ Rachel Aramburu, Sarah Stauffer Curtiss & Merissa Moeller, *New Department of Interior Review May Heighten Scrutiny and Lengthen Permitting Timelines for Some Wind and Solar Projects*, JD SUPRA (Jul. 22, 2025), <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/new-department-of-interior-review-may-2515595/>; Memorandum from Gregory Wischer, Deputy Chief of Staff of Policy, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, to Assistant Secretaries Bureau and Office Heads, Departmental Review Procedures for Decisions, Actions, Consultations, and Other Undertakings Related to

for renewable energy, including wind.¹¹ Congressional Republicans have aided President Trump in this endeavor: 2025's so-called "One Big Beautiful Bill" ended tax credits for renewable energy projects that enter service after 2027 while opening federal lands and waters to oil drilling and slashing the royalties oil companies would pay the government for access.¹²

Given the critical role that wind will play in powering American homes in the years ahead, DOI's recent actions must be understood and any planned efforts to impede American access to clean energy must be revealed. To assist the Subcommittee's understanding, please provide the following information to the Subcommittee by September 12, 2025:

1. Please provide a list of all stop work orders for renewable energy projects that have been issued since January 20, 2025, including the nature of the project, the date of the issuance and whether the project has resumed.
2. Please provide a detailed description of the specific national security interests of the United States cited in the DOI's August 22, 2025, stop-work order issued to Revolution Wind¹³;
3. Please provide a detailed description of the specific environmental concerns cited in the DOI's April 16, 2025, stop-work order issued to Empire Wind¹⁴; and
4. Please provide a detailed description of the rationale used to justify the planned stop-work order for the Maryland Offshore Wind Project.

Wind and Solar Energy Facilities, Jul. 15, 2025, <https://www.doi.gov/media/document/departmental-review-procedures-decisions-actions-consultations-and-other>.

¹¹ Press Release, Department of the Interior Curbs Preferential Treatment for Wind Energy, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Jul. 29, 2025, <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/department-interior-curbs-preferential-treatment-wind-energy>.

¹² Spencer Kimball, *Trump megabill gives the oil industry everything it wants and ends key support for solar and wind*, CNBC (Jul. 3, 2025), <https://www.cnbc.com/2025/07/03/trump-one-big-beautiful-bill-oil-gas-coal-solar-wind-ira-tax-incentive-repeal.html>.

¹³ Director's Order, from Matthew N. Giacona, Acting Director, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, to Rob Keiser, Head of Asset Management, Orsted North America Inc., Aug. 22, 2025, <https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/renewable-energy/Director%26%23039%3BsOrder-20250822.pdf>. "[DOI] is seeking to address concerns related to the protection of national security interests of the United States and prevention of interference with reasonable uses of the exclusive economic zone, the high seas, and the territorial seas, as described in that subsection of OCSLA."

¹⁴ Director's Order, from Walter D. Cruickshank, Acting Director, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, to Matthew Brotmann, Secretary, Empire Offshore Wind LLC, Apr. 16, 2025, <https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/renewable-energy/state-activities/BOEM%20Director%26%23039%3Bs%20Order%20Empire%20Wind.pdf>. DOI issued stop-work order "to allow time for it to address feedback it has received, including from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), about the environmental analyses for that project."

In addition, please provide the Subcommittee with the following records¹⁵ by September 12, 2025, and any subsequently produced records responsive to these requests on a bi-weekly basis thereafter:

1. All records related to the stop-work order issued to Revolution Wind;¹⁶
2. All records related to the stop-work order issued to Empire Wind;¹⁷
3. All records related to the decision whether to halt construction of the Maryland Offshore Wind Projects;
4. Any records regarding communications with the White House regarding the Revolution Wind, Empire Wind, or pending Maryland Offshore Wind Project stop-work orders; and
5. Any guidance drafted, promulgated, or relied upon since January 20, 2025, regarding how DOI reviews new or existing offshore wind projects, including any processes for assessing national security implications, economic concerns, or environmental impact of those projects.

¹⁵ For purposes of this request, “records” include any written, recorded, or graphic material of any kind, including letters, memoranda, reports, notes, electronic data (emails, email attachments, and any other electronically-created or stored information), direct messages, chats, calendar entries, inter-office communications, meeting minutes, phone/voice mail or recordings/records of verbal communications, and drafts (whether or not they resulted in final documents).

¹⁶ Director’s Order, from Matthew N. Giacona, Acting Director, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, to Rob Keiser, Head of Asset Management, Orsted North America Inc., Aug. 22, 2025, <https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/renewable-energy/Director%26%23039%3BsOrder-20250822.pdf>.

¹⁷ Director’s Order, from Walter D. Cruickshank, Acting Director, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, to Matthew Brotmann, Secretary, Empire Offshore Wind LLC, Apr. 16, 2025, <https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/renewable-energy/state-activities/BOEM%20Director%26%23039%3Bs%20Order%20Empire%20Wind.pdf>; Amendment to Director’s Order of April 16, 2025, from Walter D. Cruickshank, Acting Director, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, to Matthew Brotmann, Secretary, Empire Offshore Wind LLC, May 19, 2025, <https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/documents/renewable-energy/state-activities/BOEM%20Directors%20Order%20Empire%20Wind%20Amendment.pdf>.

Please contact the Subcommittee should you have any questions about responding to these requests. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard Blumenthal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" and last name "Blumenthal" clearly legible.

Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman
Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations