

ATTACHMENT 4

1 MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
2 AIR & RADIATION MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATION
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6 PUBLIC HEARING FOR US WIND'S
7 OFFSHORE WIND FARM PROJECT
8

9 PERMIT APPLICATION
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12 The hearing in the above matter commenced on
13 Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 6:09 p.m., at the Ocean
14 City Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City,
15 Maryland.

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18 BEFORE: SHANNON HEAFEY, Hearing Officer

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21 Reported by: George L. Quade, CERT

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1 forms of technology to harvest clean energy to fuel our
2 grid in ways that are economically and environmentally
3 sound. For these reasons, I remain strongly opposed to
4 any offshore development in the Atlantic Ocean. Thank
5 you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. HEAFEY: Thank you.

8 Commissioner Bertino?

9 MR. MITRECIC: No. Commissioner Mitrecic.

10 MS. HEAFEY: I'm sorry?

11 MR. MITRECIC: Commissioner Mitrecic is
12 speaking.

13 MS. HEAFEY: Oh, okay. Wonderful. Thank you.

14 MR. MITRECIC: I'm on the list farther down, so
15 you can scratch me off.

16 MS. HEAFEY: Okay.

17 MR. MITRECIC: Good evening. And, again, thank
18 you all for being here. It's nice that you had this
19 public hearing in the town and in the county that's most
20 affected by these windmills moving forward.

21 My name is Joe Mitrecic. I'm speaking on

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1 behalf of the Worcester County Commissioners. We are
2 opposed to the air quality permit and approvals sought by
3 US Wind. This project is doing nothing to improve local
4 quality of life. While wind might be called clean
5 energy, this project will bring pollutants to our air and
6 water. The dozens of boats that will be required for
7 construction, and later maintenance and operations, will
8 produce hundreds of tons of nitrous oxide, contributing
9 to smog, acid rain, and potentially leading to algae
10 blooms in the ocean.

11 Construction won't last forever, but operations
12 and maintenance will be required through the life of
13 these turbines. Even when the turbines are not
14 operational, US Wind's boats will be. What does that
15 mean for our residents? This project is already
16 eliminating Worcester County's only remaining fish
17 houses, crippling our commercial harbor, and is poised to
18 drastically reduce tourism in our town.

19 If these latest approvals are granted, it will
20 also be emitting nitrous oxide, carbon monoxide, and
21 greenhouse gases, into Worcester County. If MDE moves

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1 forward with foolishly granting this permit and these
2 approvals for US Wind, given the adverse local impacts,
3 no waivers should be granted. The controls proposed are
4 not enough to protect the local population from the
5 impacts from the project. Worcester County will need
6 increased air quality monitoring to ensure area residents
7 aren't being unfairly burdened with the dirty side
8 effects of clean energy.

9 The bottom line is these monstrosities will
10 never offset the carbon footprint created by
11 manufacturing, construction, and maintaining. Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. HEAFEY: Thank you.

14 Commissioner Weston Young? Are you here?

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You got demoted.

16 MS. HEAFEY: I'm so sorry, what --

17 MR. YOUNG: I'm chief administrative officer.

18 MS. HEAFEY: Oh, I'll fix that.

19 MR. YOUNG: Thank you. Good evening. Once
20 again, I'm the chief administrative officer for Worcester
21 County, and I thank you for your time tonight.

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1 I am a professional engineer, and I also have a
2 seat on MDE's air quality control advisory council. What
3 we have proposed here are permits that, if authorized,
4 will allow the degradation of the air quality of Ocean
5 City and Worcester County. We currently have no
6 significant stationary emission sources in this area.
7 The construction process and daily operations will add
8 NOx and fine particulate to our air, that is the air our
9 citizens and the eight million unique visitors that come
10 to the county and Ocean City, breathe.

11 Further, in November in a presentation in
12 Salisbury, representatives from US Wind said the O&M
13 facility proposed will house 100 jobs. If you've been to
14 West Ocean City, or the harbor area, you're aware that
15 there's already parking and congestion concerns. Now add
16 up to 100 more cars to the mix. This is not an
17 insignificant increase in pollution, and it will further
18 expand the air quality impacts in-shore.

19 Lastly, the wind doesn't always blow. And
20 what's powering all these homes that this project is
21 supposed to power when nothing's being generated? The

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1 electrons have to come from another power source, likely
2 coal, or natural gas generated power. So now to power
3 the homes that this project is supposed to power, at
4 least two power generation systems have to be maintained,
5 one supposedly green, the other likely not.

6 This is inefficient and ineffective. This is
7 neither clean nor green. And ultimately it does not
8 provide a single positive impact to our county, our
9 citizens, or our visitors. And I ask that you deny these
10 permits.

11 I think a significantly more elaborate study
12 needs to be performed that includes all the air quality
13 impacts this project will bring. However, if you decide
14 to go forward, I think any monitoring waivers should be
15 denied. And given the project's timeline for completion,
16 Tier V emission standards should be imposed because
17 they'll likely be wrapped up by the time these O&M boats
18 are operating. And that's on the boats, the generators,
19 and any other equipment they have.

20 And, further, any offsets that are needed for
21 this project should be located in Worcester County, the

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1 only county being impacted by this. So I thank you for
2 your time and consideration.

3 MS. HEAFEY: Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. HEAFEY: Mayor Meehan?

6 MR. MEEHAN: Thank you. Thank you for the
7 invite this evening and allowing us the opportunity to
8 speak. If you would have asked, I would have gotten you
9 another podium that would have made it a little easier.

10 MS. HEAFEY: Sorry. Appreciate that.

11 MR. MEEHAN: So thank you. My name is Rick
12 Meehan, and I'm the mayor of Ocean City, Maryland. And
13 I'm here tonight representing the Mayor and City Council
14 and the citizens of Ocean City, and we're united in our
15 opposition to all three air quality permits that are
16 before us this evening.

17 The first time I addressed this issue regarding
18 the US Wind project was over seven and a half years ago
19 at a public hearing held by the Maryland Public Service
20 Commission in Berlin, Maryland. I stated my concerns
21 about the project at that time. They were ignored.

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1 We stated our concerns, I can't even tell you,
2 at how many public hearings over the last seven and a
3 half years, and all of them have been ignored, every
4 single one. Not one concession has been made, not one
5 change has been made, to the project to address any of
6 our concerns. It seems unbelievable, doesn't it? Not
7 one.

8 Tonight, unfortunately I expect the result to
9 be the same. And despite the comments made by my
10 colleagues that spoke before me about greenhouse gases
11 and those that will be emitted by this project, I think
12 they'll be ignored and these permits will be approved
13 as this project continues to be fast-tracked through the
14 system. And, believe me, it has been fast-tracked at
15 every single stage.

16 I would like to know if MDE, or those that are
17 involved in this project, have any experience at all
18 previously with evaluating wind turbine projects, in
19 particular one this size. Is there any experience at the
20 staff level with regard to this?

21 So we're talking about quality. Well, I want

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1 to talk a little bit about quality. What about the
2 quality of life here in Ocean City and the Eastern Shore?
3 I think my colleagues have spoken about that. What about
4 the quality of the view off our coast when we're looking
5 at what I thought were 914, 938-foot tall turbines, that
6 will totally industrialize our viewshed.

7 What about the quality of the vacation
8 experience, which studies have shown will decline
9 dramatically if the turbines are visible from our beach?
10 What about the quality of our ecosystem that will be
11 dramatically altered during the construction and
12 operation of these monstrous turbines? What about the
13 reduced quality of the Atlantic flyway and its impact on
14 migratory birds, and ultimately the quality of our
15 coastal bays? What about that quality?

16 What about the quality of our commercial
17 fishing industry that US Wind is basically looking to
18 eliminate entirely by taking over our West Ocean City
19 harbor? What about the quality of the recreational
20 fishing experience that will forever be altered with the
21 construction of these turbines?

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1 What about the quality of our real estate
2 market and property values that will plummet if our
3 viewshed and our economy are destroyed. US Wind has
4 never even been required to do an economic study on the
5 impact of this project; fast-tracked. What about the
6 quality and the loss of jobs that currently exist today?
7 What about that?

8 What about the quality of life for rate payers
9 across the State of Maryland that will now be faced with
10 a wind tax to provide electricity that may or may not
11 ever be delivered to them?

12 The Governor of Delaware today stated that the
13 US Wind project would save Delawarrians over \$200 million.
14 Well, thank you Maryland rate payers for taking care of
15 our good neighbors in Delaware.

16 These permits have already been approved. This
17 is a formality this evening. And, respectfully, I think
18 everybody knows that. And if seven and a half years have
19 proven anything to me, that's the case tonight.

20 But if you look around the opposition is
21 growing. Ocean City stands together with Worcester

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1 County, Fenwick Island, Delaware, and over 20 co-
2 plaintiffs in our lawsuit against BOEM and the
3 questionable approval of this project. Questions are now
4 finally being raised state-wide about the viability and
5 the true cost benefit of this project. Are wind farms
6 really the answer to solving our energy problems and to
7 addressing clean energy? I think in final analysis the
8 answer will be no, and we'll all be left behind. Why
9 would we do that?

10 You can approve an air quality permit, but you
11 will not stop our opposition or the right of our local
12 government to represent our citizens. This has been a
13 bad project from the beginning, and you, the State, has
14 been bullied by US Wind, and we have been ignored by the
15 State. But this is about our quality of life and our
16 future, and we will not stand down. Again, we stand in
17 opposition and ask you to deny these permits. Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. HEAFEY: Thank you. I'd like to call up
20 town administrator Terry McGean.

21 MR. MCGEAN: Good evening. My name is Terry

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1 McGean, and I am the city manager for Ocean City,
2 Maryland. I'd also like to thank MDE for being here
3 tonight, and specifically for being here in Ocean City,
4 in Worcester County, and not someplace on the other side
5 of the bridge talking to people who aren't affected by
6 this project. So we all, I think, appreciate that.

7 I am speaking in opposition to the approval of
8 all three US Wind air quality permits under discussion
9 tonight. The town of Ocean City has strongly expressed
10 our opposition to the US Wind project since it was first
11 presented to the public in 2017.

12 Our concerns have consistently fallen on deaf
13 ears, and instead US Wind and the State of Maryland have
14 made matters worse, doubling the size of the turbines,
15 doubling the number of turbines, and moving the turbines
16 closer to our shore.

17 The threats to our economy, our viewshed, our
18 property values, our fishing industry, and our ocean
19 environment, from this project are now well-documented.
20 Studies predict a minimum 12 percent loss in tourism
21 trips, and a 50 percent loss of vacation rentals. BOEM's

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1 own environment impact statement says the viewshed impact
2 in Ocean City will be major and change the character of
3 the area. To make way for their industrial turbine
4 maintenance facility, US Wind plans to displace the only
5 land port for Maryland's commercial fishing fleet. And,
6 finally, the federal government has approved US Wind's
7 COP without any thought, any mention, of how a
8 catastrophic blade failure, such as what just occurred in
9 New England, would be prevented, much less how it would
10 be cleaned up.

11 Now US Wind comes asking for an air quality
12 permit for their so-called green energy project. And
13 once again our state ignores the concerns of the citizens
14 most impacted by the project and rubber stamps three more
15 permits.

16 These permits will allow US Wind to belch out
17 41,673 tons of greenhouse gases each year off our coast.
18 That's the equivalent to the emissions from 9,000
19 passenger cars. So imagine 9,000 cars sitting in our
20 ocean idling, driving around all year long. That's what
21 they're going to be doing.

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1 The permit also allows US Wind to produce 616
2 tons -- not 100, 616 tons of nitrous oxide per year. As
3 mentioned, that's the equivalent of 56,000 cars driving
4 per year. As mentioned, nitrous oxide contributes to
5 smog and acid rain, and, most importantly, given this
6 project's location, is a known water pollutant causing
7 algae blooms.

8 Enough is enough. This project is bad for
9 Ocean City; it's bad for Worcester County, and it's bad
10 for the State of Maryland. Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. HEAFEY: Thank you. Mayor Magdeburger?

13 MS. MAGDEBURGER: Rick, I'm your neighbor over
14 there in Delaware. I don't want that. I don't want that
15 -- the money.

16 I thank you for taking the comments tonight.
17 I've echoed comments of all the others that have spoken
18 before me, particularly my comments, and they're very
19 good and very direct.

20 I am the mayor of Fenwick Island, Delaware.
21 I'm your neighbor across the border. Fenwick Island is

US Wind Air Quality Permit Public Hearing

Statement from Worcester County Chief Administrative Officer Weston Young

Jan. 9, 2025

Good evening, my name is Weston Young and I am the Chief Administrative Officer for Worcester County. I am a professional engineer and a member of MDE's Air Quality Control Advisory Council. What we have proposed here are permits that, if authorized, will allow the degradation of the air quality of Ocean City and Worcester County. We currently have no significant stationary emission sources in this area. The construction process and daily operations will add NOX and fine particulate to our air — the air our citizens and the 8 million visitors each year will breathe.

Further, in a November presentation in Salisbury, representatives from US Wind said the O&M facility proposed in the harbor will house 100 jobs. If you've been to the West Ocean City area and around the harbor, you're aware there are already parking and congestion concerns. Now add up to 100 more cars to the mix. This is not an insignificant increase in pollution either and will further expand the air quality impacts inshore.

Lastly, the wind does not always blow. What is powering all the homes that this project is allegedly supposed to power when nothing is being generated? The electrons will have to come from another power source, likely coal or natural gas generated power. So now, to power the homes that this project is supposed to power, at least two power generation systems have to be maintained, one supposedly green, one very likely not. This is inefficient and ineffective. This project is neither clean nor green. And, ultimately, it does not provide a single positive impact to our county, our citizens, or our visitors.

I ask that you deny these permits. I think a significantly more elaborate study needs to be performed that includes ALL the air quality impacts this project will bring. If you decide to move forward, I think any monitoring waivers should be denied and, given the project's timeline for completion, tier 5 emission reductions should be required on all boats, generators, and any other equipment, as those standards should be developed by then. Further, any and all offsets to be located in Worcester County. I thank you for your time and consideration.

US Wind Air Quality Permit Public Hearing

Statement from Worcester County Commissioner Joe Mitrecic

Jan. 9, 2025

My name is Joe Mitrecic and I'm speaking on behalf of the Worcester County Commissioners. We are opposed to the air quality permit and approvals sought by US Wind.

This project is doing nothing to improve local quality of life. While wind might be called clean energy, this project will bring pollutants to our air and water. The dozens of boats that will be required for construction and later maintenance and operations will produce hundreds of tons of nitrous oxide, contributing to smog and acid rain and potentially leading to algae blooms.

Construction won't last forever, but operations and maintenance will be required through the life of the turbines. Even when the turbines aren't operational, US Wind's boats will be. What does that mean for our residents? This project is already eliminating Worcester County's only remaining fish houses, crippling our commercial harbor, and is poised to drastically reduce tourism. If these latest approvals are granted, it will also be emitting nitrous oxide, carbon monoxide and greenhouse gasses in Worcester County. Where are our offsets?

If MDE moves forward with foolishly granting this permit and these approvals for US Wind, given the adverse local impacts no waivers should be granted. At a minimum, the state needs to mandate better controls and monitoring. The controls proposed are not enough to protect the local population from the impacts from this project. Worcester County will need increased air quality monitoring to ensure area residents aren't being unfairly burdened with the dirty side effects of clean energy.