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ATLANTIC COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND COMMISSIONERS MUST ENGAGE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST OFFSHORE WIND

The future of Atlantic County's economy could be at significant risk, based on the future impacts of offshore wind projects and the industrialization of our ocean. Projects closest to our coast, Atlantic Shores, and Ocean Wind developers (permit still active) will build 566 highly visible giant wind turbines starting 9 miles off our beaches; 357 will be 1040 ft high and 209 will be 906 feet high. In addition to the projects adjacent to our coast, another group of 6 offshore wind development projects are planned directly east of the ones next to our coastline in an area known as the New York Bight. These developers are planning to build 549 more turbines starting 27 miles off the coast at an even greater height of 1312 feet. That is a total of 1,115 industrial wind turbines off of our South Jersey coast in our pristine ocean.

Over the last year it was telling how the elected leadership in both Cape May County and Atlantic County dealt with the planned wind turbine developments off their coasts which will have an extreme economic impact on the future of our communities. Cape May County's leadership saw the potential negative impact of the offshore wind developments on their economy. They educated themselves, their local elected officials, and their public; hired experts and legal counsel, sued the organizations behind these projects, and fought courageously against the wind development off their coast. Interestingly, Orsted subsequently suspended operations off of the coast of Cape May County. Atlantic County addressed the offshore wind developments quite differently. In February of 2023, a large number of concerned citizens attended the Atlantic County Commissioners meeting when a decision on an offshore wind resolution was to be presented. Based on the Commissioners' comments to the public, the general attitude was, "there is nothing we can do" and "it is a done deal." Not one commissioner stated that there was something they could, or should do, about the offshore wind projects. Now fourteen months later, both the Atlantic County Executive and the Atlantic County Commissioners have taken no public action demonstrating that they educated themselves, informed their public, or hired experts and legal counsel to help navigate the complexity of the offshore wind project developments. On April 15, 2024, the same group of concerned citizens went back to the Atlantic County Commissioners meeting to present the results of a detailed report (each Commissioner and the County Executive were emailed the detailed report prior to the meeting) on the economic damages that will occur to Atlantic County as a result of the offshore wind projects. Once more these concerned citizens were rebuffed with the same rhetoric mentioned above, some officials even questioning County jurisdictional authority regarding the offshore wind construction!

The time is now for both the Atlantic County Executive and the Atlantic County Commissioners to demonstrate leadership in addressing the serious issues with the wind development projects off our coast. It is time to follow Cape May County's blueprint as referenced above. It works. Compared to the County's challenging economic issues of the past, the offshore wind projects will have an even greater catastrophic impact to Atlantic County economic revenues and property values. The casino industry may move away since Atlantic City will no longer offer the "coastal vibe" that is an attraction for its customers. Tourism? Fishing? The Boardwalk? The Beaches? Environmental Justice for the residents of Atlantic City? It is nearly impossible to imagine how the municipalities and towns will survive. Do the Atlantic County Commissioners have a plan for how they will lead the transition from a tourism, beach, and fishing economy with coastline views littered with hundreds of offshore industrial wind energy utility plants? If the County Executive and the Commissioners continue to remain indifferent to these offshore wind projects, their next priority will be the planning for the huge collapse in the economy and tax base, combined with exorbitant electricity rate increases. It is time for our elected officials, the Atlantic County Executive and Atlantic County Commissioners to stand up and represent the good citizens of Atlantic County to protect them and stop this impending madness, as Cape May County has done.

Below is a summary of the economic impacts of the wind development projects off the coastline of Atlantic County that were presented to the Commissioners on April 15 and subsequently ignored. The full report contains the details and calculations to support the summary statements by using scientific studies used to prepare the analysis, and can be found at the following website: Defendbrigantinebeach.org

Residential Property Value Loss

- Based on the impact of an industrialized ocean view from beach homes in Atlantic City, Brigantine, Longport, Margate, and Ventnor, total property values could be reduced by \$2.2 billion, and the County, municipalities, and school districts could lose over \$36 million in annual tax revenues.

Rental Demand Loss

- 50% of prior renters would not rent again with turbines visible regardless of rent discount. Including Atlantic City, Atlantic County annual rental income loss could be \$17.2 M (10%) to \$68.9 M (30%). Excluding Atlantic City, Atlantic County annual revenue loss could be \$4.5M (10%) - \$17.9M (40%). Lost rental income NPV over 20 years could be \$65M - \$250M.

Tourism Revenue, Job Losses, and Tax Losses

- 16.5% - 24% would not visit Atlantic County beach towns, which could be a loss of: 8,700-12,700 jobs or 175,000 -255,000 job years over the project life.
- \$1.3 – \$1.9B in annual revenue losses or NPV of \$17.4 B - \$25.5 B over the project life.
- \$142 - \$206 million government tax loss revenue over the project life.
- Wind Turbines will not be a Significant Tourist Attraction based on survey participants not willing to pay more for rental property with a view of wind turbines off of the coast.

Large Energy Cost Increase

- For residents, businesses, and especially fragile seasonal tourism businesses. Based on the most recent analysis for 11GW of offshore wind energy in New Jersey, electricity rates are expected to increase by over 55% for residents, 70% for commercial and over 80% for industrial users by 2047. Based on the most recent solicitation for 3742 MW of power over 20 years, rates are projected to increase by 20%-30%.

Recreational Fishing Revenue

- ~\$19M/ YR losses to the NJ economy over an estimated 20-year period of wind turbine construction and operation.

Other Tourist Industry Impacts ?

- The future of the Annual Farley Marina Jimmy Johnson Fishing Tournament, Annual Atlantic City Air Show, and other Beach Concerts, and other Beach Centric Entertainment Events, Bars and Restaurants is uncertain. The airshow alone brings 100,000 tourists to Atlantic City and \$50 million to the economy.

Casino Contraction

- Bricks and mortar operating losses for casinos may cause further consolidation in AC. Losses in Casino revenue and profits could reduce local and state taxes/fees including but not limited to the annual \$200 million PILOT tax payments and \$700+ million annual Gaming Specific taxes and fees. The Casino PILOT program ends in 2026.

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