

Rhode Island Fisherman's Advisory Board
Lanny Dellinger, Chairman

August 31, 2023

Jeff Willis, Executive Director
Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council
Stedman Government Center
Suite 116, 4808 Tower Hill Road, Wakefield, RI 02879-1900

Dear Jeff,

We, the undersigned members of the Rhode Island Fisherman's Advisory Board (FAB), hereby resign and refuse to participate any longer in the Rhode Island Ocean SAMP process. It has become abundantly clear that the Rhode Island CRMC has made deference to offshore wind developers its top priority regardless of the requirements of the Ocean SAMP, the cost to the environment, or the impacts to Rhode Island's fishing industry. In staff's own words, the purpose of the FAB/CRMC review process of offshore wind projects is to move the permits forward. We as members of the FAB thought that the purpose of FAB/CRMC review was to ensure that offshore wind projects conformed to the requirements and restrictions of the Ocean SAMP. We were wrong. The Ocean SAMP process has been reduced to mere political theater, to which we refuse to lend any further credence by our presence.

FAB members have collectively invested and sacrificed thousands of hours of our own time, at our own expense, and provided CRMC with expertise, data, science, research, and experience. But we will no longer waste our time. Concurrence decisions are made ahead of time regardless of any other considerations, FAB expertise rejected and ridiculed by the Council as "anecdotal" while the developer is free to provide misinformation with impunity, staff spends its time attempting to downplay impacts and placate developers rather than hold developers to the standards of the Ocean SAMP, and we are now at the point that CRMC is asking the FAB to review projects without legal support. The process has become a mockery of what the Ocean SAMP was designed to accomplish.

It is apparent that the Council does not take its regulatory role seriously. As the 7th most regulated industry in the nation, we in the fishing industry know what it is like to be held to strict regulatory standards, including environmental standards. However, to advance a policy agenda of offshore wind development above all else, CRMC has been willing to condone industrial construction and literal plowing of glacial moraine in violation of the Ocean SAMP's environmental protection requirements, the decimation of cod spawning grounds and adverse "population level impacts on Atlantic cod" per NOAA, significant long-term impacts on Rhode Island's fishing industry in violation of the Ocean SAMP's enforceable policy, and open water cooling systems not even allowed in the state receiving power from the project to be constructed on top of spawning grounds, to name a few. The Council has been unwilling to support even any findings of the FAB legal, economic and water quality experts.

We will not allow our names to be connected in any way to Council approvals now amounting to wholesale ocean destruction. Rhode Island is supposed to be the Ocean State, not the Windmill State.

Sincerely,

Lanny Dellinger

Christopher Brown

Michael Marchetti

Greg Mataronas

Chris Lee

Brian Thibeault

Meghan Lapp

Rich Hittinger

Rick Bellavance