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Michael Tikoian, Chair
Coastal Resource Management Council
Stedman Government Center - Suite 3
4808 Tower Hill Road
Wakefield, RI 02879-1900

Tuesday, March 11, 2008

RE: Sierra Club Rhode Island Chapter Recommends Streamlined Moratorium on Renewable Energy Projects on Rhode Island Coastlines

Dear Mr. Tikoian:

Please accept this letter as the Sierra Club Rhode Island Chapter's official comments on the proposed moratorium on renewable energy projects in Rhode Island.

Given the need for an orderly process, as well as the need for expedience, the Sierra Club Rhode Island Chapter proposes that rather than instituting a 12-month moratorium on renewable energy projects, the CRMC should institute a one-month moratorium in order to develop the Ocean Special Area Management plan. During this time, the CRMC should continue to accept applications for renewable energy projects and inform the submitting entities that such applications will need to be compliant with the final plan. Also, the special area management plan should be conducted in a public and open way to encourage the democratic process among local communities and stakeholders.

The Sierra Club Rhode Island Chapter supports an Ocean Special Areas Management Plan to design an orderly renewable energy development process in order to have reliable renewable energy projects along the Ocean State's coastlines. However, such a process MUST be designed in a way that does not unnecessarily delay the development of renewable energy projects in Rhode Island.

The Sierra Club's top priority is the development of solutions that replace unsafe and polluting sources of energy for Rhode Island communities. These smart energy solutions are also the driving force behind a new energy economy that could bring thousands of new jobs to the Ocean State and increase prosperity for all Rhode Islanders through energy independence.

Rhode Island's coastlines are replete with renewable energy sources, including wind, wave, and tidal power. If Rhode Island is able to get both community wind projects and large scale wind farms working before Connecticut and Massachusetts, it is likely that

Quonset Point, will become the home of a wind turbine manufacturing facility that will serve all Northeast wind projects. That facility will generate many new good union jobs and move Rhode Island toward energy independence. The available wind resource in Rhode Island is four times the amount that the Carcieri administration has proposed for procuring for Rhode Island's electricity mix. The Ocean State can, for the first time, create a lucrative energy export.

I look forward to reviewing the minutes of tonight's meeting and to receiving your response to this letter.

Sincerely,

Chris Wilhite, Director
Sierra Club Rhode Island Chapter