



A bold voice for transportation workers

THE PROMISE OF A CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY MUST BE BUILT BY AMERICAN WORKERS: MAKING THE RIGHT INVESTMENTS IN OFFSHORE WIND

The emerging offshore wind industry in the United States provides significant opportunities to expand the domestic workforce in the maritime and building trades sectors to create good-paying union jobs while increasing our nation's clean energy supply chains. During President Biden's first week in office, his Administration announced an [Executive Order](#) of a national goal to deploy 30 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2030, which would generate enough power for more than 10 million American homes annually and lower CO2 emissions to alleviate the climate crisis. While addressing this goal, Congress and the Administration must adopt policies that support long-term investments in a domestic workforce, including building, manufacturing, crewing, and maintaining offshore wind vessels that benefit American workers and keep the U.S. maritime industry thriving.

The labor movement, shipping companies, and senior military officials have long sounded the alarm regarding the decline of the U.S. merchant marine vessel fleet and workforce vital to our national security and energy independence. Maritime unions collectively represent the vast majority of United States Coast Guard (USCG) licensed and unlicensed American maritime personnel who work aboard commercial vessels of all types and are among the most highly trained and qualified mariners in the world. American trade unions continue to manage state-of-the-art apprenticeship programs and job training facilities. Our nation's maritime unions already possess the infrastructure necessary to provide prestigious vocational training to operate the vessels required to develop and maintain offshore wind farms. As such, offshore wind developers should work proactively with representatives of maritime labor to ensure necessary investments are being made to create a robust supply of mariners to meet project capacity as further domestic offshore wind projects come online. Congress and the Administration must enact legislation to support policies in the offshore wind sector that benefit American workers from top to bottom; otherwise, we run the risk of building our nation's clean energy infrastructure to the benefit of foreign "flags of convenience" ship owners that undercut American jobs.

To that end, we urge Congress to require the Department of Labor to develop a wage determination study to establish a domestic 'prevailing wage' applicable to merchant mariners on vessels engaged in wind energy projects on the Outer Continental Shelf. All mariners aboard vessels operating in the Outer Continental Shelf as part of a wind energy project should receive fair compensation comparable to what American mariners receive. We applaud the [historic agreement](#) between North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU) and Ørsted that expands union jobs and sets the offshore wind industry on the right track by ensuring projects are done safely and with the best-trained workers. It is time for federal lawmakers to implement legislation to ensure that workers who crew, operate, load and unload cargo, and provide maintenance to new vessels in the emerging domestic offshore wind industry have the same worker protections.

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