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NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

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October 12, 2018

Kenneth Sheehan, Director
Division of Clean Energy
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
PO Box 350
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Mr. Sheehan,

The Board of Public Utilities should include offshore wind turbines and fuel cells as key portions of the Energy Master Plan. Being a coastal state, New Jersey has the ability to create clean and renewable electricity using offshore wind farms. Offshore wind farms have been used across the globe for many years, and New Jersey can learn from the experiences of other countries to ensure a smooth ramp-up of our off-shore wind assets. The construction and operation of the wind turbines will create high paying technical jobs and spur economic development. The surplus electricity produced from the wind turbines can be used to create renewable hydrogen gas for use in stationary and mobile fuel cells.

Fuel cells provide power without the pollution that results from combustion. Fuel cells are a distributed energy resource and provide load following energy during times of high demand. Natural gas used in stationary fuel cells produce virtually no pollution compared to natural gas used in traditional power generation. The heat from the chemical reaction can also be channeled provide heat and hot water for buildings, which can bring the total energy conversation efficiency up to 80%. Lastly, fuel cells take up significantly less space than other clean energy technologies and can be placed in brownfields and other underutilized areas.

As the Board of Public Utilities creates the Energy Master Plan, they should give due consideration to offshore wind farms and stationary fuel cells. Though many fuel cells utilize natural gas to produce electricity, they use it in a more efficient manner with less pollution, and can be sited alongside heavy energy users in congested areas. Hydrogen gas created though electrolysis can be used to store surplus clean energy that would otherwise go unused.

Sincerely,

Gordon M. Johnson
Assemblyman, District 37