

Assemblyman Bruce Land
September 16, 2019

Chairman Grijalva, Congressman Van Drew, Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Bruce Land and I am an Assemblyman representing the First Legislative District in New Jersey. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to say a few words today.

I would echo the sentiments of my colleague, Senator Bob Andrzejczak. The fishing industry is vital to the economy of not just Cape May County, but to Cumberland County and beyond. Several communities along the Delaware Bayshore were home to some of the largest shellfish ports along the East Coast and are still home to significant ports for both wild caught and aquaculture oysters.

It is imperative that the fishing industry, both commercial and recreational, be given a seat at the table. Their concerns must be addressed, and their questions must be answered. But I do believe that if done correctly, there is potential for this to benefit our local economy. Shipyards located up the Delaware in Cumberland county are perfectly poised to maintain the vessels that will be needed to ferry labor and supplies out to the windmills. The local labor force would be eager to compete for the jobs, many with experience on the water. So I also ask that you ensure that a portion of the jobs created by the wind industry stay in the communities in close proximity to these projects.

These projects could go a long way to moving New Jersey and our nation away from our reliance on fossil fuels and could also have significant benefits to our local economy, but it cannot be at the expense of our State's fishing industry. I would like urge that as both the State and federal government move forward in this process, that the fishing industry have a legitimate, and equal, seat at the table.

I thank you for your time in allowing me to testify here today.