



August 8, 2016

Ms. Abigail Ross Hopper, Director
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
1849 C Street, N.W., Room 5212
Washington, D.C. 20240-0001

Dear Ms. Hopper:

I am writing on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association in regard to BOEM's request for information from interested or affected parties, as published in the *Federal Register*, Vol. 81, No. 122, June 24, 2016, and relating to potential wind energy development offshore of Oahu. As a small non-contiguous state, we have pursued and developed renewable energy in our quest for sustainability and to reduce our dependence on imported fossil fuels. Offshore wind energy has the potential to introduce a new form of renewable energy that could help us reach those goals.

However, one prerequisite that we have with projects of this scale is local stakeholder engagement. As the former mayor of the City and County of Honolulu, I appreciate the importance of ensuring transparency and collaboration in the development of any large-scale project. There have been a number of such projects in our state that have ultimately failed because of a lack of this due diligence. In keeping with the spirit of this process, early and broad stakeholder outreach is vital to ensuring that local needs are addressed and that trust and confidence are nurtured among all parties involved and affected.

The members of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, which is the largest private sector hospitality industry organization in the state, understands the importance of addressing infrastructural and environmental concerns as crucial to our future. We also recognize that when large projects are proposed to increase the hospitality inventory or change the landscape of our industry, it is essential that we first seek out the public's thoughts and concerns and collaborate with all stakeholders and partners in ensuring the outcome is for the greater good.

If offshore wind energy is to be given a chance to contribute to Hawaii's clean energy future, we ask that you insist on early and comprehensive stakeholder engagement, particularly among interested parties in our islands, as a necessary step in your qualification process.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO