



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe

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Office of the Governor

Contact: Brian Coy

Email: brian.coy@governor.virginia.gov

**Governor McAuliffe Announces Virginia Awarded First
Wind Energy Research Lease**

~ Commonwealth on the Cutting Edge of Domestic Clean Energy Resources ~

RICHMOND — Governor Terry McAuliffe today announced that Virginia is the first state in the nation to receive a wind energy research lease in federal waters from the United States Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM).

Speaking at today's announcement to the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, **Governor McAuliffe said**, "Developing our clean energy resources is an essential element of building a new Virginia economy. With this research lease, Virginia is positioned to be the first state to build wind turbines in the Atlantic Ocean and take the next step toward the clean energy economy we need to create jobs and lower energy costs now and into the future."

"Virginia is well-positioned to become the east coast hub of future offshore wind energy development and the supply chain that supports it," **said Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade Maurice Jones**. "This research lease provides a tremendous opportunity to develop a level of expertise about offshore wind development previously unseen in the U.S. BOEM has been a tremendous partner with the Commonwealth on this project, and we look forward to continuing that relationship in the future."

“The data collected under this research lease will help us understand the wind potential, weather and other conditions relevant to standing up wind power generation offshore Virginia,” **said BOEM Director Abigail Ross Hopper**. “This data will be valuable not only to BOEM and DMME, but also to other government agencies, the offshore renewable energy industry, universities, environmental organizations and others.”

"I'm really proud that we were able to help craft a deal that will position Virginia as a national leader in renewable energy development and give Gov. McAuliffe yet another asset as he continues his work to build a new Virginia economy," **said Attorney General Mark Herring**. "As we compete for the jobs of the 21st century and work to mitigate the effects of climate change on vulnerable areas, including Hampton Roads, a groundbreaking clean energy project like this shows that Virginia is ready, willing, and able to lead."

The Commonwealth applied for the research lease in 2013 and has named Dominion Virginia Power as the designated lease operator. Execution of the 30-year lease is an important step in the project to allow Dominion to construct and operate the Virginia Offshore Wind Technology Advancement Project (VOWTAP), a grid-connected, offshore wind demonstration project consisting of two Alstom 6-megawatt turbines to be located approximately 24 nautical miles east of the Virginia Beach shoreline. The intent of VOWTAP is to demonstrate successful installation and generation of power 24 nautical miles offshore, validate the estimated wind resource potential in the lease area, identify inefficiencies and gaps in offshore wind development, and utilize a previously untested regulatory process established by BOEM.

The research lease area is adjacent to Dominion's commercial Wind Energy Area. Data gathered from the two test turbines will support Dominion's future commercial-scale wind power development by reducing costs, maximizing turbine availability and service life, and minimizing environmental impacts. This research will benefit wind energy developers across the globe.

Future commercial wind energy development projects that will result from VOWTAP research are expected to create several thousand jobs in Virginia and add to the development of domestic clean energy resources in the United States. Virginia is well positioned along the Mid-Atlantic coast to become the central hub to support wind power development planned in Virginia and other states to the north and south.

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