

Scott Baker
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“Reducing Market Barriers to Offshore Wind Power Through State Energy Policy”

Demand for offshore wind power in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions has been rising over the past decade due in main part to a better understanding of the resource and technology, increasing mandates on utilities to obtain electricity from renewable sources, and recognition of current and future costs of emitting carbon dioxide from power plants. Yet, to date, there are no operational offshore wind farms in state or federal waters and significant market barriers face those projects that have been approved by states. This research project will examine state approvals for offshore wind development in Delaware, New Jersey, and Rhode Island to address shortcomings in the design of a competitive bidding and selection process. With no precedent for an offshore wind Request For Proposal (RFP), it is understandable why states pursued different means toward the same end; however, elements of these RFPs may be grossly inadequate for evaluating projects on a level playing field and selecting the best project at the lowest cost. This research aims to guide the process by which future energy decisions are made and to lower market barriers for offshore wind power.