Mayor Richard W. Meehan
301 N. Baltimore Avenue Ocean City, MD 21842

Dear Ocean City Residents and Property Owners,

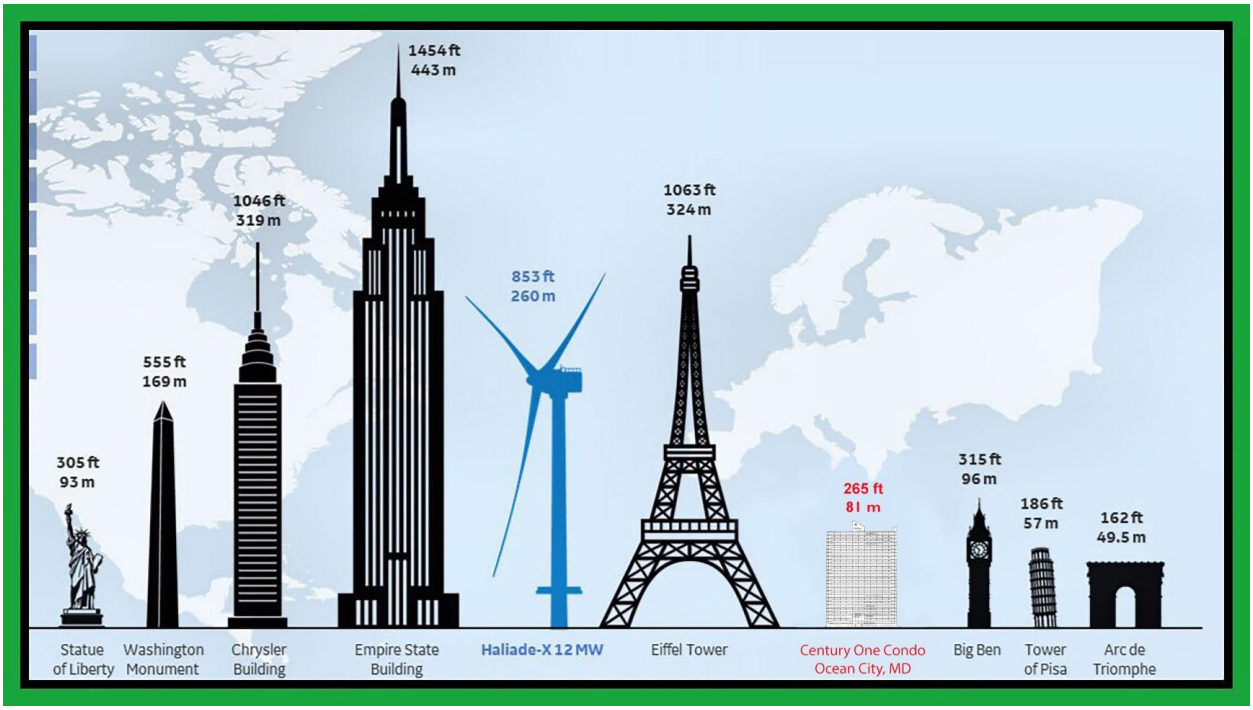
It's no secret that our resort community is unlike anywhere else, which is likely why you have decided to call Ocean City your home. Our 10 mile, beautifully maintained beach and three-mile historic Boardwalk often rank among the nation's top beaches, offering families like yours the perfect place to relax and enjoy the naturally beautiful view of the Atlantic Ocean.

Unfortunately, our natural viewshed is in danger of being changed forever. As you may or may not know, two companies are planning to build offshore wind farms directly off of Delaware and Maryland beaches. An **Italian company (U.S. Wind) plans to construct dozens of 853-foot-tall wind turbines, located on 46,595 acres (73 square miles) of Atlantic Ocean, as close as thirteen miles from our beloved beach.** This project will forever change the natural beauty of our beach, not only for us but for future generations.



Rendering of shoreline view of wind turbines

These 12-megawatt turbines are as tall as the Chrysler Building in New York City, making them the largest wind turbines on Earth. Towering 300 feet taller than the Washington Monument and more than three times the height of the tallest building in ocean city, the blades of the turbines alone are larger than the Statue of Liberty at 361 feet long. If this project is built as proposed, our current unobstructed views to our natural horizon will have wind towers impeding our clean coastal view.



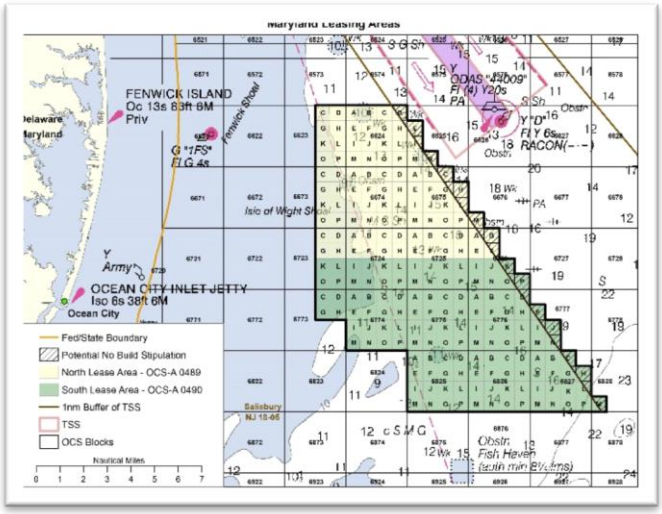
The Town of Ocean City while in support for clean energy in Maryland; has opposed the size and location of the wind turbines. As the size of the turbines has increased, so has our concern for the visual impact they will have on our community and our property values.

In order to avoid the destruction of our natural view forever and the negative impact on our community, the Town of Ocean City is insisting these turbines be moved at least 33 miles from shore. This distance would allow the project to continue without having any impact on our viewshed, our tourism, our home values, our economy and future generations. **This can be done.** In fact, the State of Virginia recently approved a project 27 miles off their coast.

According to studies done by the University of Delaware and North Carolina State University, tourism drops significantly when wind turbines are in view. In fact, these studies

suggest 15% of tourists would go elsewhere (*UD study*) and 54% of renters would not return (*NC State Study*).

Not only does Ocean City's tourism industry generate thousands of jobs annually, but it is also adds several billion dollars to our economy. If these projects continue as proposed, our local economy is undeniably in jeopardy. Jobs could decline and beach view homes may be sold due to the visual impact on the ocean view. Home sales, combined with lower rents, will likely result in lower home values for every resident and property owner in Ocean City.



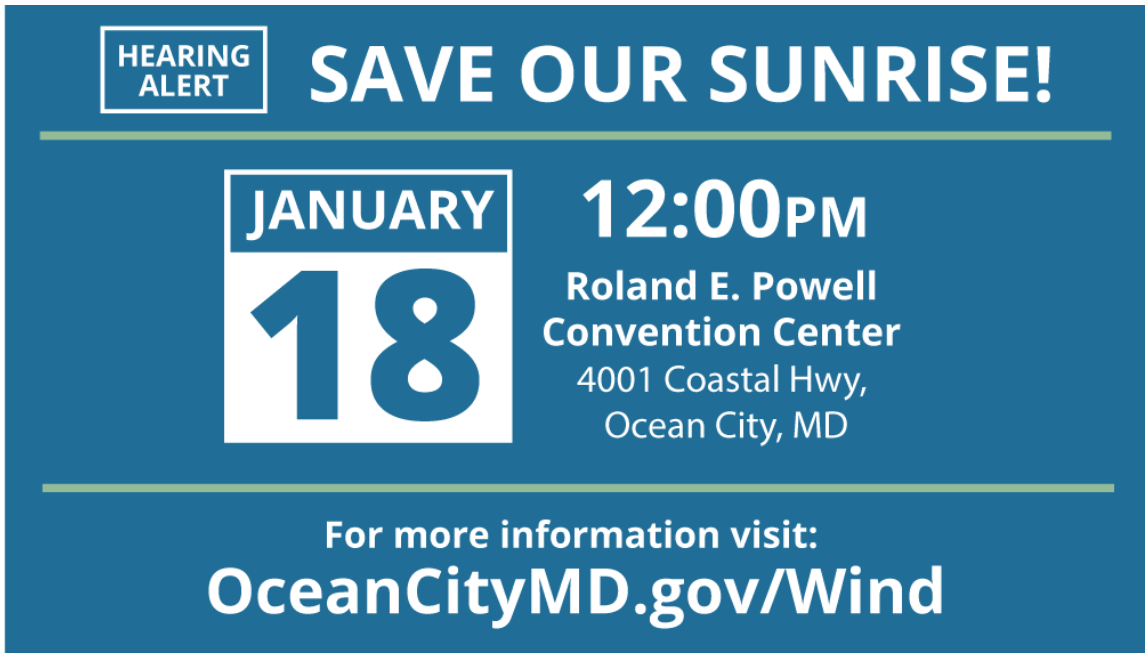
Wind Turbine Project Location

In case the dwindling of property values and the unknown impact this project will have on the Ocean City tourism economy doesn't concern you, consider the following:

- **Power Grid Connections:** The Town of Ocean City has not been provided any locations or proposed plans for transmission connections for the offshore wind project. Which means, we have no idea where they intend to bring ashore the monster cables, large transformers, and all the other gear that will be required to connect to the power grid. We believe the uncertainty of these required instillations raises additional questions and warrants further review and extensive study.
- **Power Costs:** These wind turbines are subsidized with billions of Maryland electric rate payer dollars and will produce power that costs 300% more than what local residents pay now for electricity.
- **Commercial Fishing:** The commercial fishing industry opposes the offshore wind turbines due to their harmful impact on the fishing industry.
- **Marine & Wildlife:** There are significant concerns about the effect the construction of turbines and of the electronic fields created by the generators and transmission

cables on marine life, including whales. With gigantic turbines disrupting the natural elements of the ocean there is no telling what this project will do to marine life and their ability to navigate. In addition, massive whirling turbine blades placed directly in the middle of the Atlantic flyway, one of North America's major annual migration routes, will affect the migration of millions of birds.

Each of these concerns is warranted and we believe should subject these projects to further study before they proceed. The Maryland Public Service Commission has granted our request to hold a public hearing to determine if additional restrictions should be placed on the projects due to the drastic increased size of the wind turbines.



The public hearing will be held on Saturday, January 18, 2020 at 12pm at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center (4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, Maryland). As residents, property owners and protectors of the future of Ocean City, we need your voice of concern at the Public Service Commission. We need a significant turnout to show that Ocean City property owners matter.

We have said it before, and we will say it again.... We only have one chance to do this, so we need to do it right. Making sure these turbines are out of the viewshed of Ocean City is

not only a benefit to our residents and property owners, but also to the 8 million people who visit our beach each year. Most importantly, it is our responsibility to protect the natural beauty of our beach so that our children, grandchildren and their grandchildren can enjoy the same pristine horizon that we enjoy every day in Ocean City.

Sincerely,



Rick Meehan

Mayor

If you want clean energy, but not at the cost of the loss of our beautiful ocean views, lower property values and detriment to our tourist economy,
please call or write the Maryland Public Service Commission
and your State and Federal elected officials.

Maryland Public Service Commission
William Donald Schaefer Tower
6 St. Paul St., 16th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21202
or submit electronically: https://www.psc.state.md.us/make-a-public-comment/
For more information, visit: https://oceancitymd.gov/wind