

**Massachusetts 83C Round 4 Offshore Wind Solicitation:
Request for Public Comment**

February 10, 2023

The Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), the Massachusetts Electric Distribution Companies (EDCs), and the Attorney General’s Office (AGO) (collectively “RFP Drafting Parties”) welcome public comments on the following areas relevant to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a fourth-round solicitation for offshore wind energy projects under Section 83C (83C Round 4). The RFP Drafting Parties provide the questions below to solicit input from interested parties and stakeholders on specific questions of interest related to 83C Round 4.

Interested parties and stakeholders are invited to provide comments in response to the prompts below and/or on any other topics related to 83C Round 4. Comments are also welcomed with specific reference to sections of the last RFP solicitation, 83C Round 3, available [here](#). Whenever possible, please provide explanations or justifications for any recommendations provided. Please note that the RFP Drafting Parties will consider comments in drafting the RFP but not otherwise respond to comments received.

Submission Instructions: Please submit all comments via email to Marian Swain (Deputy Director of Policy and Planning at DOER) via email to Marian.Swain@mass.gov as soon as possible, but no later than **5:00pm on Wednesday, March 1, 2023**. Please include “83C Round 4 Comments” and the name of the individual or organization submitting comments in the subject line.

Confidentiality: *Please note that all comments received will be posted publicly on the MACleanEnergy.com webpage following the submission deadline; unless a party indicates its submission contains proprietary or commercially sensitive business information that should be treated as confidential energy information, to the extent permitted by law. Such submissions should be clearly marked “CONFIDENTIAL” and submitted along with a public version with any such confidential information redacted. Commenters are encouraged to limit redactions to the extent possible. Pursuant to DOER’s authority under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 25A, Section 7, and Section 83C certain energy and other information collected by DOER can be maintained for the sole and confidential use of the Commonwealth, its agencies, and offices. DOER may also apply any applicable exemption under the Commonwealth’s public records law. DOER shall also confidentially provide any and all confidential comments or responses to the Massachusetts Electric Distribution Companies, the Office of the Attorney General, the Independent Evaluator, and possibly to the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (collectively, the “Massachusetts Parties”) in a manner as determined by DOER, in its sole discretion. In the event confidential information is submitted to DOER and confidential treatment is not afforded for any reason, by a governmental agency or otherwise, or any*

confidential information is inadvertently made public, DOER and the Massachusetts Parties shall not be held responsible.

Questions for Public Comment:

1. Procurement Size: What should be the maximum procurement target, in megawatts (MW), for the 83C Round 4 solicitation?
2. Procurement Schedule: The 83C Round 4 RFP must be issued within 24 months of the prior solicitation pursuant to Section 83C.
 - a. What should the RFP drafting parties consider when designing the schedule for the 83C Round 4 solicitation, including deadlines for bid submission and selection of projects for negotiation?
 - b. How could the 83C Round 4 schedule be designed to best align with other offshore wind procurements being conducted or planned in neighboring Northeastern states?
3. Commercial Operation Date: What should be the latest allowable commercial operation date for projects bidding into 83C Round 4, and why?
4. Transmission:
 - a. How should the 83C Round 4 requirements regarding transmission and interconnection of proposed projects be designed to maximize efficient use of the onshore transmission system?
 - b. Please comment on potential ways to integrate 83C Round 4 with ongoing regional transmission initiatives, including the [Joint State Innovation Partnership for Offshore Wind](#).
 - c. Please comment on the advantages and challenges of the “Meshed Ready” transmission requirement in the 2022 NYSERDA offshore wind RFP ([ORECRFP22-1](#)) and what factors would need to be considered for such an approach to be applicable in a Section 83C solicitation.
5. Inflation, Supply Chain, and Macroeconomic Factors:
 - a. How could 83C Round 4 be designed to best account for current and future rates of inflation and other supply chain and economic pressures on the offshore wind industry to both ensure project viability and protect Massachusetts ratepayers?
 - b. Please comment on when costs for offshore wind project components and labor should be expected to stabilize, including any comments on how that expected timing would impact bid development for 83C Round 4.
 - c. Please comment on the Inflation Adjustment provision of the 2022 NYSERDA offshore wind RFP ([ORECRFP22-1](#)) and what factors would need to be considered for such an approach to be applicable in a Section 83C solicitation.
 - d. Please comment on recommended timing applicable for an inflation adjustment price provision, if warranted, including any comments on the price adjustment

timing in the 2022 NYSERDA RFP, which allows for an adjustment from bid submission to BOEM COP approval. Please also comment on how such a provision should be considered in the evaluation process when comparing fixed price bids to inflation-adjusted bids.

6. Federal Funding:

- a. How could 83C Round 4 be designed to ensure Massachusetts ratepayers receive the maximum benefits of the new federal funding opportunities, tax credits, and/or other programs available to offshore wind developers under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)?
- b. Please comment on when the Internal Revenue Service should be expected to issue regulations related to relevant tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act.
- c. Please comment on the provisions of the Rhode Island RFP requesting bidders to describe how they would consider EDC customers in the event of the availability of any tax credit or other government grant or subsidy not contemplated in their proposals.

7. Economic Development, Workforce, and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI): How could 83C Round 4 be designed to best encourage investments and commitments that maximize economic benefits to the Commonwealth, support workforce harmony, and advance goals for DEI? Specifically, please refer to Section 2.3.2.i of the 83C Round 3 and to the relevant provisions in Section 61 of *An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind*.¹

- a. Memorializing Commitments: In 83C Round 3, DOER executed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the selected projects to memorialize and track their commitments to economic development and DEI.² Please provide any comments on these prior MOUs or other mechanisms to memorialize and track these commitments with selected projects.

8. Environmental Justice: How could 83C Round 4 be designed to best encourage project design and investments that avoid negative impacts on, and direct positive benefits of the project to, Environmental Justice (EJ) communities? Please refer in particular to Appendix J of 83C Round 3 and to the relevant provisions in Section 61 of *An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind*.

9. Environmental and Fisheries Impacts: How could 83C Round 4 be designed to best encourage project designs that avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative impacts on the environment and fishing industry? Please refer in particular to Appendix J of 83C Round 3 and to the relevant provisions in Section 61 of *An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind*.

¹ Chapter 179 of the Acts of 2022. Available at: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter179>

² Public versions available at: [15416361 \(comcloud.net\)](https://comcloud.net/15416361) (Commonwealth Wind) and [Microsoft Word - 83C Rd3 Offshore Wind Development and Reporting Agreement - MFW - EXECUTION v2.docx \(comcloud.net\)](https://comcloud.net/Microsoft%20Word%20-%2083C%20Rd3%20Offshore%20Wind%20Development%20and%20Reporting%20Agreement%20-%20MFW%20-%20EXECUTION%20v2.docx) (SouthCoast Wind Energy, formally known as Mayflower Wind).

10. Please provide any additional comments regarding implementation of the new provisions in Section 61 of *An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind* in 83C Round 4.