Biden administration’s policies will favor offshore wind ... page 16
WorkBoat began covering the promising offshore wind sector almost a decade ago. In December 2016, the industry took a big step when the Block Island Wind Farm, a five-turbine 30MW offshore wind project developed by Deepwater Wind, became the first fully operational wind farm in the U.S.

That same month, WorkBoat Magazine named the Atlantic Pioneer, the first U.S.-flag wind farm vessel built by Blount Boats for Atlantic Wind Transfers to service Block Island, its Boat of the Year. After receiving the award, Marcia Blount, president of Blount Boats, said, “It’s a fascinating industry that American shipyards can be a part of. We’re just the crew vessels, we’re just the first. There’s going to be a mix of these vessels going out to these wind farms.”

Since then the sector has had numerous starts and stops, but now the offshore wind industry appears poised at the brink of the optimism it first saw a decade ago, when Obama administration officials talked of wind power one day assuming coal’s then-dominant role in the nation’s electric grid. With the Biden administration looking more toward renewable energy, offshore wind’s time could be here again. Thus, we feel the time is right to launch the new WorkBoat + Wind quarterly digital publication. Enjoy.

David Krapf, Editor in Chief  |  dkrapf@divcom.com

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Equinor wins biggest New York offshore wind procurement
Offshore wind developer Equinor and its incoming partner BP will build a pair of turbine arrays totaling 2,490 megawatts capacity under a new renewable energy procurement announced by New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo. The Empire Wind 2 and Beacon Wind 1 arrays would be among the largest renewable projects in the U.S., Equinor said. In combination with Equinor’s planned Empire Wind 1 array, the partners would ultimately deliver up to 3.4 gigawatts of power to the state.

Crowley forms new division with focus on offshore wind
Crowley Shipping has formed a New Energy division strategically focused on diverse services supporting the emerging energy sectors in the U.S. including offshore wind. The company said it expects its expansion in the offshore wind industry to be as a total lifecycle service provider, with tailored solutions in support of the entire project. The solutions include transportation of turbines during construction, designs for industry-specific support vessels and shoreside terminaling.

Dominion plans 2.6-gigawatt Virginia offshore wind project
Dominion Energy has filed plans to build and operate a 2,640-megawatt offshore wind turbine array off Virginia with federal regulators. It’s the largest planned offshore wind farm to date for U.S. waters. The construction and operations plan presents details about the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind commercial project to the Bureau of Offshore Energy Management, which must evaluate and give approval to the company to build on the 112,800-acre lease it obtained in 2013.
The Covid-19 pandemic has posed many challenges to the maritime industry, but it has also given it time to think to the future, and that future is looking strong in renewable energy.

At a February congressional hearing, Michael Roberts, senior vice president at Jacksonville, Fla.-based Crowley Maritime and president of the American Maritime Partnership, told lawmakers that offshore wind “is one of the most important emerging markets for our industry.”

Offshore wind will produce “tens of thousands of jobs, tens of billions of dollars in economic output and play a significant role in decarbonizing electricity production in the United States,” Roberts said, adding that “American maritime is excited to be playing a key role in realizing those expectations.”

After several years of inconsistent messaging about offshore wind development from the Trump administration, Roberts and others said that wind power now has a clear path forward under President Biden, who has given a strong endorsement to it and to the role to be played by American mariners and ships in its development.

Just a few days after taking office, Biden signed the Buy American executive order which confirmed that the Jones Act is “an opportunity to invest in America’s workers as we build offshore renewable energy, in line with the President’s goals to build our clean energy future here in America.”

At about the same time, the fiscal 2021 National Defense Authorization Act was coming into force, which states that all American laws, including the Jones Act, will apply to offshore wind development on the Outer Continental Shelf.
**Jones Act** must apply to offshore wind vessels

By Kirk Moore, Contributing Editor

Congress’ amendments to the Jan. 1 National Defense Authorization Act “cleared up any ambiguity” that all U.S. laws governing offshore energy apply equally to the new wind sector, a top maritime lawyer says. “Prior to that, it wasn’t so clear. All those laws are crystal clear now,” Charlie Papavizas, chair of maritime practice in the international law firm Winston & Strawn, said during the Business Network for Offshore Wind’s Ports and Vessels online conference in January.

After months of lobbying by U.S. offshore operators and wind industry advocates, Congress added provisions to the annual defense spending bill to specify that the Jones Act, must apply to vessels and cargo involved in offshore wind development. Lawmakers came to bipartisan agreement that the 1953 Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, which has governed offshore oil and gas development, likewise applies to renewable energy.

The Jones Act requires that cargo moved between U.S. ports be carried by U.S.-flagged and crewed vessels. Questions of whether exemptions can be granted for using foreign vessels and crews — particularly wind turbine installation vessels, or WTIVs which have yet to be built in the U.S. — are an issue the nascent industry needs resolved.

That in turn could trigger a spate of new rulings from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which reviews industry questions that arise under those laws. Requests for rulings have languished, some for years, because of uncertainty within the agency, said Papavizas. “That logjam is now gone” and maritime businesses can anticipate many more rulings in coming months, Papavizas predicted.

Seacor Marine’s 335-class liftboats Jill and Robert could be used for building the next U.S. offshore wind projects. Seacor Marine photo
Great Lakes Dredge to design Jones Act vessel for offshore wind subsea rock installation

Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Corp. is moving forward with the design and development of the first U.S.-flagged Jones Act inclined fall pipe vessel for subsea rock installation. The vessel represents a critical advancement in building the future of the U.S. offshore wind industry, including establishing a U.S.-based rock supply chain network spanning East Coast states with active offshore wind leases, the Oakbrook Terrace, Ill., dredging company said.

The plan calls for GLDD’s vessel to be U.S. owned, built and operated by U.S. workers. The vessel is expected to help spur additional job growth and regional economic opportunities corresponding with the establishment of a U.S.-based rock supply chain network for subsea rock installation, with quarries in states along the East Coast. Further, the project should generate additional economic and job opportunities on the Gulf Coast, where the vessel will be built, GLDD said.

While the vessel initially would serve the East Coast, GLDD believes it will be available as offshore wind projects develop along the Gulf and West coasts.

‘We applaud GLDD’s foresight and decisive action in entering this potentially transformative new industry in its early days. Their new vessel will complete another major piece of the offshore wind industry puzzle.’

— Liz Burdock, CEO, Business Network for Offshore Wind
How will an accelerated interest in the wind market define the future of ports?

By Shelby Huff, Contributing Writer

Over the next 20 years, an expected two dozen offshore wind farms will be developed in U.S. coastal waters. Accelerated interest in the wind market, however, dictates a necessary upgrade to the ports that allow the market to exist. While several ports are already planning for this transition, many others lack funding and resources, or face other obstacles due to geography or nearby populations. With the wind market predicted to grow to a $1 trillion industry by 2040, it’s crucial that ports receive the necessary support to allow the wind market to advance and provide a clean and sustainable source of energy that could lead to a zero-carbon future.

Port Infrastructure
Since U.S. ports were not designed to support offshore wind, the nascent industry will rely on port infrastructure — heavy-lift capacity, adequate laydown for large components, and geographic proximity to the project site.

Congestion
Another crucial element for offshore wind development is adequate access in and out of harbors. With consistent year-round winds, the East Coast is appealing for offshore energy development. However, its well developed coastline could pose potential challenges in obtaining commercial use permits due to heavy traffic from passenger, cargo, recreational and fishing vessels.

Maintenance
With wind turbines increasing in size, offshore wind developers face the challenge of obtaining sufficient vessels for construction and maintenance, as well as physical holding space in ports.
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Keel laid for first U.S.-flag offshore wind turbine installation vessel

By Kirk Moore, Contributing Editor

Construction of the first U.S.-flag, Jones Act-compliant offshore wind turbine installation vessel marked a milestone with the keel laying late last year for the Dominion Energy vessel.

The 472’x184’x38’ WTIV will be one of the largest in that class, with a Huisman main crane boom length of 426’ and lifting capacity of 2,200 tons — enough to handle the next generation of 12- to 14-megawatt turbines standing over 800 feet tall.

The vessel is under construction at Keppel AmFELS at its Brownsville, Texas, shipyard. It will have a capacity of 119 people when it goes into service by the end of 2023, according to Dominion Energy.

The overall project cost is estimated to be around $500 million. Dominion said financing is arranged through a lease financing agreement with leading global banks and “construction and financing costs will not impact Dominion Energy Virginia’s customers’ bills.”

Dominion is already operating its twin-turbine, 12-MW Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) pilot project, located 27 miles off the coast of Virginia Beach. That project went live in September and is operational while awaiting

‘We are pleased to be able to build the largest wind turbine installation vessel in the U.S. for Dominion Energy and support the growing offshore wind industry.’

— Mohamed Sahlan, President, Keppel AmFELS
Keppel AmFELS laid the keel for the first ever Jones Act-compliant offshore wind turbine installation vessel at its shipyard in Brownsville, Texas, in December. Dominion Energy photo

Keppel AmFELS laid the keel for the first ever Jones Act-compliant offshore wind turbine installation vessel at its shipyard in Brownsville, Texas, in December. Dominion Energy photo

the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management’s final technical review.

Ocean surveys and geotechnical work are underway for Dominion’s 2,640-MW full scale CVOW commercial project, which will be located in a lease area adjacent to the pilot project. These surveys will support the development of the project’s Construction and Operations Plan that Dominion will submit to BOEM this month.

“This is a monumental step for the offshore wind industry in America,” said Robert M. Blue, Dominion Energy’s president and chief executive officer, in a statement announcing the keel laying. “Dominion Energy is proud to be leading a consortium of respected industry participants in the construction of the first Jones Act compliant offshore wind turbine installation vessel, which will provide significant American jobs, and provide a reliable, homegrown installation solution with the capacity to handle the next generation of large-scale, highly-efficient turbine technologies. This will better enable the offshore wind industry to bring clean, renewable energy to customers in the U.S.”

Dominion Energy said it expects the vessel “to be fully utilized in support of the installation of over five gigawatts of planned offshore wind generation off the East Coast of the U.S. through 2027 and beyond.”

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The vessel construction is expected to create nearly 700 direct jobs and use more than 14,000 tons of U.S. domestic steel, with nearly 10,000 tons sourced from Alabama and West Virginia suppliers. After commissioning the vessel will be based out of Hampton Roads, Va., with a U.S. crew.

It’s a big step for the overall prospects of the nascent U.S. offshore wind industry — Vineyard Wind’s recent regulatory problems with the Trump administration notwithstanding.

A recent report from the Government Accountability Office echoed concerns among wind developers that the limited global WTIV fleet could be a significant bottleneck to constructing more than a dozen wind turbine arrays off the East Coast.

Because of rules set by the Jones Act that require cargo to be transported between U.S. ports by U.S. vessels and U.S. mariners, developers can only use foreign-flag WTIVs in a kind of choreographed arrangement with U.S. vessels carrying materials out to work sites.

With increasing offshore wind development in Europe and Asia, the availability of those vessels will get tighter and could constrain the U.S. market, the GAO reported. Dominion Energy’s vessel would be the first out of a U.S. yard after three years of construction.

If the federal government issues final approvals for a major offshore wind project such as Vineyard Wind, the GAO reported that could trigger major investment decisions by developers and others to start other U.S. WTIV projects.

Dominion Energy awarded a contract to Keppel AmFELS for the engineering, procurement and construction of the offshore wind turbine installation vessel. The vessel is designed by GustoMSC.

“We are pleased to be able to build the largest wind turbine installation vessel in the U.S. for Dominion Energy and support the growing offshore wind industry. Keppel AmFELS has a solid track record and capabilities in a wide range of offshore vessels and we are also able to leverage the experience of our parent company, Keppel O&M, in offshore renewables to provide a compelling construction solution for this milestone project,” said Mohamed Sahlan, president of Keppel AmFELS. “Supported by our highly-skilled local workforce, state-of-the-art equipment and reliable suppliers across the U.S., we are confident of delivering a high-quality vessel to Dominion Energy safely, cost effectively and on time.”

Seajacks, a leader in the operation of self-propelled jackup vessels that provide safe and efficient offshore wind turbine installations, will assist Dominion Energy with construction and operations oversight. Dominion Energy expects the vessel to operate continuously for several years through contracts with offshore wind projects in the U.S.

“This next-generation turbine installation jackup vessel is vital to the safe and cost-effective deployment of offshore wind energy in the United States”

— Blair Ainslie, CEO, Seajacks
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The new way of doing business

By Liz Burdock, president and CEO, Business Network for Offshore Wind

The last time a Democratic president took office U.S. automakers banded together to oppose fuel efficiency standards. Today, we are seeing a completely new approach from business partners who know they must embrace the clean energy transition to thrive.

Less than 30 days into President Biden’s administration, General Motors announced it was on a path to an all-electric future. Corporations wanting to operate under similar regulations rallied around the Paris Climate Agreement as their roadmap to a clean energy transition. The agreement has changed global market forces so dramatically, suggesting we are severely underestimating the size of the U.S. offshore wind market that is so vital to achieving federal, state, and corporate clean energy goals.

Strong actions out of Washington, D.C., suggest policymakers are finally realizing offshore wind’s true potential for American jobs and moving to support the industry. Late last year, Congress extended an extremely valuable 30% Investment Tax Credit (ITC) for offshore wind projects beginning construction through 2025, a deal that exceeded expectations and illustrates growing industry awareness on Capitol Hill.

President Biden positioned renewable energy development at the center of his administration’s policies and appointed strong proponents all over government. In one of his first actions, the president issued an executive order doubling federal offshore wind development, which should lead to opening up leasing areas and boosting potential generation from around 21 gigawatts (GW) now to...
that current commitments to procure 30-GW of offshore wind energy generation will fall short of achieving 100% clean energy. When roadmaps are finally released, we expect to see many states calling for the doubling or tripling of their current commitments.

The industry can also expect an uptick in corporate power purchase agreements (PPAs) driven by falling offshore wind price costs. Amazon recently shattered its own record for corporate offshore wind procurement when it announced a 10-year offshore wind contract in the Netherlands and Germany. Similar PPAs are occurring in Asia. As the U.S. puts more steel in the water, we can expect corporate America to drive the offshore wind market similar to how it has propelled solar and onshore wind markets.

The U.S. has already seen globally competitive cost price points with only seven turbines in the water. Imagine the price with 15-MW turbines, built-out port infrastructure, manufacturing, vessels, and local supply chains?

Recent actions by major oil and gas companies offer even further evidence to the offshore wind market’s undervaluation. Industry giant BP recently invested $1.1 billion for an equity share of Equinor’s New York lease area following Shell’s purchase of a New Jersey wind area. A recent round of bidding in Britain was driven higher by oil and gas companies getting more involved. Like GM, corporations who aggressively fought change just years ago know they must embrace it now.
Biden administration’s policies will favor offshore wind

By Kirk Moore, Contributing Editor

The incoming Biden administration will elevate offshore wind energy’s prospects in the U.S. energy portfolio, and industry advocates sound increasingly confident.

Wind energy occupied a curious position in the politics of the Trump administration — often mocked and belittled by the president in public even as his own former Interior Secretary, Ryan Zinke, and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) forged ahead enabling plans for 15 East Coast offshore projects and studying prospects off California.

There will be no such ambiguity in a Biden administration — more likely a replay of 2010, when then-Interior Secretary Ken Salazar predicted offshore wind would become a major U.S. energy source. “The idea that wind energy has the potential to replace most of our coal-burning power today is a very real possibility,” Salazar said in 2010 at a public hearing in Atlantic City, N.J., promoting the Obama administration’s “all of the above” energy strategy.

A decade later, that may be materializing. In September 2020 Dominion Energy and its partner, wind developer Ørsted, switched on the first wind turbines in U.S. federal waters for the Coastal Virginia Wind project, a pilot program for

“We are grateful that Congress has passed legislation ensuring that all U.S. laws apply to offshore wind development and providing parity between offshore oil and gas projects and offshore wind projects.”

— Aaron Smith, President and CEO, OMSA
U.S. offshore operators claim a win in Congress

U.S. offshore operators have solidified their position in the offshore wind market thanks to congressional allies that kept renewable energy under the same rules as oil and gas.

“Our legislators understood we must assure U.S. laws are clearly applied to U.S. offshore wind development and today they acted with purpose,” said Court Ramsay, president and CEO of Aries Marine, after the House of Representatives passed a measure Dec. 11 affirming that the 1953 Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act applies to wind power development.

OCSLA and the Jones Act are a recurring battleground between U.S. and foreign offshore companies, sparring for legal rulings from federal agencies and support in Congress. Offshore wind has been no different, and interest groups have clashed over creating U.S. jobs versus holding back the industry’s development.

In July, the American Wind Energy Association warned against Congress cracking down too hard, saying that extensive regulatory requirements on construction at sea “will have a significant and immediate chilling effect on the offshore U.S. wind industry just as it is about to take off.”

The Luxembourg-flagged wind turbine installation vessel Vole au Vent installed the first turbines on a U.S. federal offshore lease in 2020 off Virginia. Dominion Energy photo

up to 2.6 gigawatts of wind power offshore.

Next is southern New England. A long-anticipated decision by BOEM to approve plans for the 800-megawatt Vineyard Wind project was delayed yet again Dec. 1.

It’s the latest delay for the developers, who were within striking distance of BOEM approval in summer 2019 when the National Marine Fisheries Service’s Greater Atlantic regional office refused to sign off on an environmental impact statement (EIS) by the energy regulators.

NMFS experts and New England fishing advocates insisted the analysis was insufficient, and Interior Secretary David Bernhardt called for a new study, taking into account the cumulative effects of a dozen or more wind power arrays proposed off the East Coast.

That second round of fact-finding brought no major surprises, and BOEM announced in March that it is resuming preparation of a final EIS on the Vineyard Wind offshore energy project, reversing a move to end the permitting process in the final weeks of the Trump administration. But the delay reflects an evolving seascape.

For example, Vineyard Wind decided that instead of its original plan to use MHI Vestas 9.5-MW turbines, it will switch to the larger GE Haliade-X design producing 12 MW to 13 MW, part of the international trend toward bigger, more efficient generators.

With the Haliade-X, Vineyard Wind could reduce the layout of its first 400-MW phase from 84 turbine towers to 62, potentially mitigating some concerns and conflicts raised by commercial fishermen. The change to GE machines will also lend the project a “made in America” imprimatur at a time when the still-European-dominated industry is under pressure to maximize economic benefits to U.S. companies.

GE’s Haliade-X offshore wind turbine. GE photo

The Luxembourg-flagged wind turbine installation vessel Vole au Vent installed the first turbines on a U.S. federal offshore lease in 2020 off Virginia. Dominion Energy photo
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**INSTALLATION VESSEL DEMAND**

Global demand for wind turbine installation vessels, or WTIVs, could be a major bottleneck for the nascent U.S. offshore wind industry, in competition with the more established European market and those growing rapidly in Asia. At around $500 million each, the first Jones Act-compliant, U.S.-built WTIVs will probably take three years to come out of shipyards.

The BOEM final findings on the Vineyard Wind project off southern New England could set those decisions into motion. But the GAO paper reinforces what industry observers have predicted: There will be a period of high global demand for installation vessels, with only around 50 WTIVs now available or under construction.

Industry stakeholders told GAO analysts that they are concerned about competition for installation vessels from foreign markets. The likeliest solution in the short term will be using U.S.-flag, Jones Act compliant “feeder vessels” – barges, liftboats and other existing offshore service vessels – to ferry components from U.S. ports to foreign-flag WTIVs on the work sites.

"One turbine supplier suggested that the use of the feeder method in the United States may mean that WTIVs considered obsolete in the European..."
market because they have too little deck space to carry components for modern turbines could still be used efficiently to install turbines for U.S. projects that are carried on Jones Act-compliant feeder vessels”, the GAO said.

In a Nov. 25 report, Rystad Energy analysts predicted “the global fleet will be insufficient to meet demand after 2025, opening room for more specialized vessel orders and other oil and gas heavy-lift vessel conversions.”

“On the supply side of the equation, there are currently 32 active turbine installation vessels (five more have been ordered) and 14 dedicated foundation installation vessels (another five have been ordered),” according to Rystad.

Ironically, Rystad found that in recent years, the international market has been “relatively oversupplied... especially in Europe.” Of today’s fleet, only four vessels are capable of handling the coming generation of larger turbines like the GE Haliade.

“As technology advances and future-generation wind turbines will get even bigger, the existing fleet of vessels is
not likely to have enough capacity to install them,” the Rystad report says.

The Gulf of Mexico offshore industry is a deep pool of talent for the developing industry. The first U.S. commercial offshore wind project, the Block Island Wind Farm off Rhode Island, was built in 2016 with help from Louisiana liftboat operators Aries Marine Corp. and Falcon Global LLC, design assistance from Keystone Engineering, and foundation jackets and pilings by Gulf Island Fabrication.

That likely combination of U.S. feeder vessels and foreign heavy-lift installation will continue for the time being. Two likely candidates are the 335 class, 183.7’x134.5’ liftboats Jill and Robert operated by Houston-based Seacor Marine.

“Project developers told us that they intend to rely on the feeder approach until a Jones Act-compliant WTIV is constructed and will then decide which approach to use on a project-by-project basis,” the GAO reported.

**POLITICAL SHIFT**

“For the offshore wind industry, a President Biden is a far more positive development,” said Sarah Vilms of Squire Patton Boggs, a global law and lobbying firm with offices in Washington, D.C., given Biden’s focus on climate change.

If Biden’s policy moves are blocked, Biden, like former president Barack Obama, will likely resort to his own executive orders, said Vilms: “We expect him to use that power.”

Biden might, for example, exempt wind power development from President Trump’s September executive order calling for a moratorium on ocean energy leases from Florida to North Carolina.

There is now bipartisan recognition of renewable energy potential, said David LesStrang, also of Squire Patton Boggs. “There seems to be now acceptance on both sides of the aisle that renewables can compete with fossil fuels,” he said.

International energy analysts Wood Mackenzie predicted a sharp policy pivot after Biden took office. The new administration will act faster to help coastal states develop wind power, but over time will constrain offshore oil and gas development, according to Ed Crooks, the firm’s vice chairman for the Americas.

“There will not be a ban on fracking, but Biden has pledged to end sales of new leases for oil and gas development on public lands and waters,” Crooks said. “Offshore, the effects would be more significant, although they would take some time to become apparent.”

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Offshore wind has potential for U.S. mariners

By Aaron Smith, president and CEO, Offshore Marine Service Association

The U.S. offshore wind industry has the potential to employ thousands of my Gulf Coast neighbors, but only if loopholes are closed and pitfalls are avoided.

The Jones Act is a straightforward statute. It requires vessels transporting cargo between U.S. points to be U.S. flagged, owned and crewed. However, decades of letters written by government officials have created dozens of loopholes in the law that Congress never intended. These loopholes allow foreign vessels to transport cargo within the U.S. provided their attorney can fit the job through one of these dozen loopholes.

Many charterers prefer these foreign vessels over their U.S. counterparts because foreign vessel owners can exploit a loophole in the implementation of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) that allows these vessels to be crewed by Ukrainians, Russians, Chinese, and Filipino mariners at pay scales no U.S. mariner would, or should, accept. In one instance, OMSA found a vessel’s foreign captain making half of what a comparable U.S. captain takes home and foreign deck crew making less than $4 per hour.

These loopholes are allowing foreign vessels and crews to enjoy more of the preparatory work in U.S. wind farms than a plain reading of the law would indicate.”
law would indicate. As a result, their presence poses a potential pitfall to U.S. offshore wind. U.S. offshore wind is generally supported by much of the U.S. population. This support is based not on the nature or amount of power provided, but on the jobs provided. The continued exploitation of Jones Act and manning loopholes will quickly undermine the political support thereby decreasing the likelihood that the projects are completed or more projects are started.

As bad as those loopholes seem, other public policy pitfalls might put the offshore wind industry into even greater peril. Earlier this month, President Biden issued an executive order “pausing” new offshore oil and gas leases and permits. This ideological attack upon oil and gas will actually harm U.S. offshore wind. Many of the vessels slated to construct, service, repair, and decommission offshore wind turbines were constructed for and are operating within the offshore oil and gas industry. Other newbuilds and purpose-built wind vessels will be built on the expertise and capital gained from these operations. By pausing oil and gas leases and permits, the Biden administration is really pausing the vessel-based R&D, capitalization, and training of the U.S. offshore wind industry.

OMSA is addressing these problems on behalf of its membership. We have been actively working to close Jones Act loopholes for well over a decade. This multipronged effort is bearing fruit. The affirmation that the Jones Act applies to offshore wind that we worked with Congress on enacting is now giving Customs and Border Protection the confidence to correctly apply the Jones Act to the offshore wind industry. As we continue that effort, we will also be working to close the loopholes that allow low-wage mariners to man vessels in U.S. waters. Ensuring the administration doesn’t harm offshore wind in a misguided effort to harm oil and gas requires a different strategy. This effort requires broad engagement and necessitates that every mariner and marine or energy business owner tell their story. Our allies in Washington, D.C., need us to be the evidence that the oil and gas industry is not only a jobs producing powerhouse of today, but is vital for the future of all of tomorrow’s energy projects.

Aaron Smith is president and CEO of the Offshore Marine Service Association. OMSA is the trade association for U.S.-flag vessel operators that construct, service, repair, and decommission offshore energy assets.
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