

Public Comment Transcription

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission January 20, 2022 Meeting

Name: Steve Hansen

Representing: Hampton Roads Offshore Wind Diversity Advocacy Team

Subject: Offshore Wind Supply Chain Fund

Comment Transcription:

We have two major crises in this country, environmental degradation and social inequity. The two are related because those who are most impacted by environmental devastation are often the historically economically disadvantaged in low-income communities. National and state legislators recognize the intersectionality of environmental, racial, and economic justice and are seeking solutions that mutually support people who are disadvantaged and the planet which is being ravaged without being blinded by green energy profits derived from economic growth that will tend to favor the already economically comfortable. This is why President Biden's Executive Order 14008 was promulgated. It established the Justice40 Initiative, which aims to allocate 40% of all federal climate investments to disadvantaged communities around the country. This is also why our state legislators passed the Virginia Clean Economy Act, which directed Dominion Energy to submit a plan to the State Corporation Commission (SCC) that will provide offshore wind priority hiring from Dominion and its offshore wind suppliers to veterans, local workers, and workers from historically economically disadvantaged communities. Unfortunately, Dominion's plans sent to the SCC woefully misses the mark and will be challenged during the May SCC hearings by people I represent and others. There are no diversity hiring benchmarks in the Dominion's plan and consequently no accountability for Dominion and its suppliers. This takes us to the HRPDC legislative priority that the General Assembly establish the Offshore Wind Supply Chain and Workforce Development Fund. Last July, a Hampton Roads Alliance two-part proposal was presented here asking for state funding 1) to provide grants to adjacent supply chain candidates and 2) provide funding to the workforce development system to prepare disadvantaged community members for offshore wind employment. Like Dominion's plan the Hampton Roads Alliance offshore wind supply chain request did not, at least explicitly, link funding of supply chain candidates with the candidates agreeing to meet diversity hiring benchmarks. If this body's members truly are interested in using our offshore wind opportunity to alleviate the opportunity in wealth gaps in Hampton Roads, the supply chain proposal should stipulate diversity hiring metrics for candidate supply chain companies receiving grant money.