

Public Comment Transcription

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission March 17, 2022 Meeting

Name: Ruth Amundsen

Representing: Citizen of Norfolk

Subject: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Comment Transcription:

Good afternoon. My name is Ruth Amundsen, and I am from Norfolk. I run several businesses that install solar in disadvantaged and low-income neighborhoods, and we contracted for the hiring and training of the first African-American solar installers in Hampton Roads. I reviewed the CEDS, and it has a lot of great stuff in it, but I think it would really benefit from more attention to the economic inequities that exist in Hampton Roads, particularly as it relates to the African-American community. I think more data on that and then also more plans for how to improve and mitigate the inequities that exist between the advantaged and the disadvantaged, the haves and have nots. I think there are a lot of great examples out there of what is being done today that could be included in that plan, and if we are going to plan out to 2027, I think we need to have a plan in place that works to make everything a little bit more fair for our entire community and not just the people who already have the advantages. Thank you.

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Hampton Roads Planning District Commission March 17, 2022 Meeting

Name: Steve Hansen

Representing: Hampton Roads Offshore Wind Diversity Advocacy Team

Subject: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Comment Transcription:

Good afternoon. I am with the Hampton Roads Offshore Wind Equity and Diversity Team, and I am from Chesapeake. I have submitted written comments, as was said before, which are included in your agenda, and I will relate those to my comments here. As we have a potentially promising economic surge or actions as representatives of Hampton Roads citizens can either reduce the wealth gap or widen it for our struggling disadvantaged communities. I found that the draft CEDS fails to really hit the nail on the head when it comes to equitable economic development, and it calls into question whether equity is really adequately being evaluated in our economic decisions. This led me to provide the CEDS Steering Committee with a four-page review pointing out the diversity, equity, and inclusion shortcomings, which could be better achieved in part by more thoroughly following the CEDS guidelines recommended by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). Since my review, I have heard about the possibility of the CEDS not getting reviewed again before it went forward, and I am happy to know that that seems to be taken care of and that this body will get a review of that after all the additional comments coming in, so that is great. But also disconcerting is the vacancy of the Community Affairs and Civil Rights Administrator position for the HRPDC. Considering a position title change from Community Affairs and Civil Rights to Community Affairs and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion may be a good step forward to address more of the economic equity issues that this body faces and changing the mission statement of that position as well. So I encourage you to go ahead and fill that position and this will help us to be more attentive to the needs of our disadvantaged communities. Thank you.