

Environment & Energy

Offshore Wind Energy Bills Passed by Rhode Island Legislature

By Zach Bright

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- Measures would secure offshore wind, labor standards
 - Bills complement 100% renewable energy by 2033 goal
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Bills to advance plans for offshore wind energy and stronger labor standards to build it are among environmental bills approved by the Rhode Island Legislature.

S2583 would require Rhode Island Energy to request proposals for a wind development project that would generate anywhere from 600 to 1000 megawatts of power. S2740 would require any renewable energy projects that produce three or more megawatts to have to use union labor and apprentices and pay prevailing wages if they are directly funded or incentivized by the state.

Lawmakers passed the bills late Thursday. Gov. Dan McKee (D) has indicated that he will sign them.

Patrick Crowley, secretary-treasurer of the Rhode Island AFL-CIO, said that the bills, combined with a new renewable electric standard passed last week, make up a “three part equation.”

“The 100% renewable energy bill is legislating into existence the demand part of the economy,” Crowley said. “The offshore wind bill is legislating into existence the supply side of the economy.”

The state budget, which also passed the Legislature on Thursday, includes a one-year pilot program to make ridership on the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority’s R-Line free.

PFAS Rules, Bag Ban

Rhode Island is also on track to pass H7438, which by 2024 would ban products containing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS. The chemical class is found everywhere from certain firefighting foams to cookware and carpets and is linked to human health issues.

Crowley said the state’s firefighters union was instrumental in showing “that it’s a worker issue as much as it’s an environmental issue as much as it is a public safety issue.

A plastic bag ban and H7233—PFAS drinking water limits of 20 parts per trillion for six common compounds—both passed the Legislature on Wednesday and head to the governor’s desk.

But recent health advisories from the Environmental Protection Agency earlier this month said nearly no amounts of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) are safe to consume.

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Documents

Bill
[S2583](#)

Bill
[S2740](#)

Bill
[H7438](#)

Bill
[H7233](#)

Related Articles

[Safe Exposure Is Near Zero for Two PFAS Chemicals, EPA Says](#) (2) June 15, 2022, 9:00 AM

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