

Cape Wind Response to Attack Ad from the Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound

Regrettably, the Alliance is once again resorting to their practice of using misinformation and distortions to mislead the public about Cape Wind, this time in the form of a personal attack.

Cape Wind opponents are launching this attack ad at a time they are under intense criticism for pushing a backroom move in Congress to kill Cape Wind, and they are desperate to try to change the subject.

Energy Policy Act of 2005 & Cape Wind

The Alliance wrongly claims that Congress “slipped in” a “special-interest amendment” into last year’s Energy Bill to benefit Cape Wind.

Here’s what really happened:

Congress gave the Minerals Management Service (MMS) of the Department of Interior the authority to regulate commercial offshore wind development, both for existing project proposals and for future ones. For the two existing offshore wind project proposals, Cape Wind and Long Island, permitting applications and forms do not need to be refiled and MMS continues the existing and thorough review process that requires these projects be found in the public interest. In addition, MMS is able to charge Cape Wind with lease payments and the Energy Policy Act requires the Federal Government to share these revenues with the neighboring State. In the case of new offshore wind proposals, MMS will also use competitive bidding for a specific site in cases where there is competitive interest and before any party spends millions of dollars on an environmental impact regulatory process for that site. Drawing a distinction in these provisions between future projects and existing project proposals was necessary to avoid penalizing the Cape Wind or Long Island projects, otherwise these projects would effectively have had to start over, from the beginning.

The Alliance wrongly claims the provisions on offshore wind development in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 were “slipped in”. The offshore wind section was included in the publicly-posted versions of the Bill throughout the 2005 mark-up sessions of the Senate Energy Committee. Further, in the two weeks of consideration of the Bill by the full Senate in 2005, no objections were raised by any Senator regarding the offshore renewable energy provisions. The Energy Bill was further reviewed during open and televised conference sessions, but, again, no objections were raised as to any of the provisions applicable to Cape Wind or offshore renewable energy.

Federal and State Renewable Energy Incentives

The Alliance reveals their hypocrisy by stating their support of wind power and support of the primary federal and state incentives to promote wind power development, while they vilify and attack a wind power company for potentially qualifying to receive such incentives. These policy incentives are the Federal Wind Production Tax Credit and the Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard. These government policies exist because commercial wind power development benefits the public by contributing to cleaner air, new jobs, and greater energy independence.

It is important to also understand the Massachusetts public policy mandate for the greater development of renewable energy, the RPS, exists whether or not Cape Wind is built. According to the Massachusetts Energy Commissioner, Cape Wind would reduce the market price of renewable energy credits, and thereby reduce the cost of this program to Massachusetts electricity consumers. The Alliance also neglects to mention that the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board found that Cape Wind would reduce energy costs to electricity consumers by \$25 Million dollars per year.