October 3, 2014

The Honorable Terence R. McAuliffe
Governor of Virginia
Office of the Governor
Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor McAuliffe:

The Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority (VOWDA) respectfully requests restoration of the $1 million in FY 2016 general funds for the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) to leverage additional private and federal funds to advance commercial development of Virginia’s offshore wind energy resources and the associated supply chain.

In 2010, VOWDA was created by the Virginia General Assembly for the purposes of facilitating, coordinating, and supporting the development of the offshore wind energy industry, offshore wind energy projects, and associated supply chain vendors in the Commonwealth. These funds are needed to help achieve our mission and goal.

VOWDA believes that these funds should be restored for several reasons:

1. The appropriation of state funds to this industry will enable the Commonwealth to continue the momentum achieved since 2007 and become the home to a vibrant Mid-Atlantic offshore wind industry and supply chain.

2. Working with Dominion Virginia Power, the winner of the second competitive commercial lease sale held by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), and others, Virginia can strategically engage potential supply chain and workforce development opportunities.

3. To preserve considerable previous state investments. A great deal already has been invested, and far more in non-state funds have been leveraged, in two pending research leases and the Virginia Offshore Wind Technology Advancement Project (VOWTAP), the Virginia Wind Energy Ocean Geological Survey ($340,000 state...
funds plus $450,000 in leveraged funds), and three other research projects ($549,000 plus $665,000) and two additional research projects ($216,200 plus $242,200) which are just getting underway with BOEM cost share to conduct offshore wind site characterization surveys and measurements. Much more research is needed including an industry needs assessment and port gap analysis.

Thank you for your consideration of VOWDA’s request for additional funding in FY2016 to help accelerate the momentum that the FY2015 funding has helped to create. In this way, we can truly make Virginia a leader in renewable energy and maritime jobs.

Sincerely,

Robert Matthias
Chairman

c: The Honorable Maurice Jones
Secretary of Commerce and Trade