



# Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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**For Immediate Release – January 15, 2009**

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## **PSC Issues Final Report on Great Lakes Wind Energy Study**

MADISON – Today, a final report on the feasibility, economic potential and environmental impacts of developing wind energy on the Great Lakes was issued by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC). The study found that off-shore wind projects in the Great Lakes are feasible, and could likely be a part of Wisconsin’s energy future.

The report, which is the result of an initial investigation into Great Lakes wind development, identifies options for addressing the most significant barriers to the development of off-shore wind should the State of Wisconsin decide to pursue this alternative energy source.

“Wisconsin may have a tremendous renewable resource a few feet off of its shores in Lake Michigan, just waiting to be tapped,” said Commissioner Lauren Azar, and head of the Wind on the Water work group. “Over the next few decades, the electric industry will need to find cost-effective ways to reduce carbon emissions. Today, the Commission is encouraging continued cooperation with Wisconsin’s stakeholders to collect data on the viability of offshore wind turbines in Lake Michigan.”

The Study Group that prepared the report is comprised of a diverse member roster representing utilities, environmental organizations, customer and community groups, Indian tribes and state agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Administration and Board of Commissioners of Public Lands. The group began its work investigating the potential for off-shore wind generation in April of last year in response to a recommendation by Governor Jim Doyle’s Task Force on Global Warming.

“I want to thank Commissioner Azar and everyone who worked so hard on this investigation,” said PSC Chairperson Eric Callisto. “This report shows that wind on the Great Lakes is a reasonable energy alternative and looks to have a place in our energy future. The Commission is committed to being a leader in this area, and will work hard to collect more data and support more research to keep this initiative moving forward.”

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“Wisconsin has abundant renewable energy potential and this report is a road map that puts us on course to tapping one of Wisconsin’s tremendous energy resources in the Great Lakes,” said Commissioner Mark Meyer. “Offshore wind by no means is without its challenges; however, this study is an important step forward that could eventually make offshore wind a reality in Wisconsin, keeping Governor Doyle’s vision of energy independence for our state in the crosshairs.”

All three Commissioners agreed that the next likely steps would be to collect wind resource, wildlife, and other ecological data, and further study research and development on deep water foundations; initiate discussions with other states and Canada on procuring a construction vessel for the Great Lakes; and begin working with the Wisconsin Legislature to consider legislative changes that would facilitate the development of off-shore wind on the Great Lakes.

**The final report, *Harnessing Wisconsin’s Energy Resources: An Initial Investigation into Great Lakes Wind Development*, can be found by visiting the PSC website and clicking on the Regulatory Filing System (ERF) at <http://psc.wi.gov/>. Type case numbers 5-EI-144 in the boxes provided on the ERF system.**

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