

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

January 9, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum  
Secretary of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Pete Hegseth  
Secretary of Defense  
1300 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Burgum and Secretary Hegseth,

We write to you in opposition to the Department of the Interior's (DOI) recent pause on the leases of five offshore wind projects, including two off the coast of New York, Empire Wind 1 and Sunrise Wind. Even a 90-day pause can lead to irreparable harm and permanent losses that will increase electricity bills, kill jobs, and risk grid reliability across New York and the country. We request that DOI immediately reverse this reckless pause and the Department of Defense (DoD) provide our offices with access to the classified reports cited to justify this pause.

Empire Wind 1 and Sunrise Wind have already commenced construction and would bring 810-megawatts and 924 megawatts of power, respectively, to New York's electrical grid, powering approximately 1.1 million homes. The Trump administration's pause on these projects will only increase energy costs for New York families and threaten good-paying union jobs throughout the state and country. At a time of rising energy demand and shrinking reliability margins, we must support shovel-ready projects like these to ensure New York's electricity supply remains secure, so no household or business needs to worry about interrupted service.

Additionally, we take seriously any risks to our national security. As required by the federal permitting process, both developers for Empire Wind 1 and Sunrise Wind meticulously and rigorously completed consultations with the DoD. It is our constitutional responsibility to conduct oversight on matters related to our national security, and as such, we again request to view the classified DoD reports that DOI is using to justify this pause. Please grant our offices (including members of our staff with appropriate clearances) access to these classified reports no later than January 23, 2026.

We look forward to your prompt response and immediate attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

Kirsten Gillibrand

Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator

Charles E. Schumer

Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator