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Fishing Industry Concerns - OSW Project Siting Conflicts with Fisheries

To: California Energy Commission Staff

We were gratified to see your presentation Workshop on Oct. 26th quote the key AB 525 language: "Offshore wind should be developed in a manner that protects coastal and marine ecosystems." We urge you to work much more closely with, and consult with, the California fishing industry and both state and federal fisheries managers including the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) to identify and protect valuable but vulnerable as well as irreplaceable ocean resources to minimize adverse impacts to other ocean users, including California's commercial fishing fleet, which PCFFA represents.

Before this process of identification of suitable offshore wind locations proceeds much further, there is a huge need for FIRST the identification of vulnerable coastal and ocean floor ecosystem areas (including designated Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)) that support fragile ocean ecosystems, and to also identify and carve out protections for valuable commercial fisheries areas. We as a commercial fishing industry trade organization are by no means opposed to developing offshore wind. Indeed, our industry is already on the front lines of climate change and major changes in ocean conditions. But we MUST oppose siting of these sorts of offshore wind projects in the wrong places, where they could interfere with (or even destroy) a multi-billion dollar California fishing industry that not only creates tens of thousands of jobs but delivers high quality seafood to America's tables. Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. We stand ready to work with you on these issues.

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