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AB 525 Draft Strategic Plan (Docket 19-MISC-01)

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

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April 22, 2024

David Hochschild, Chair
California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 525 Draft Strategic Plan (Docket 19-MISC-01)

Dear Chair Hochschild:

The California Association of Port Authorities (CAPA), which is comprised of California's 11 public ports, appreciates the California Energy Commission's (CEC) diligent work on the Draft Assembly Bill 525 Offshore Wind Strategic Plan (Draft AB 525 Report).

Developing and deploying offshore wind energy will provide economic and environmental benefits to the State and the nation by helping California meet its ambitious renewable energy and climate goals. However, reaching the state's ambitious climate goals, including the production of up to 5 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind power by 2030 and 25 GW by 2045, will require significant investment in the state's existing port infrastructure.

California does not currently have the port capacity necessary to support the construction of multiple commercial-scale offshore wind farms. Due to the immense scale and extent of offshore wind components, upgrading the state's existing port infrastructure is critical and significant offshore wind projects can only feasibly occur if supported by port facilities that are retrofitted or developed with laydown areas and heavy loading capacities to construct the turbine systems.

Because of the scale of these turbines – bases with footprints as large as a baseball stadium, with towers as tall as the Eiffel Tower – ports are the only places where fabrication and assembly can occur. CAPA agrees with the assessment in the AB 525 Draft Strategic Plan that no single port will be able to serve all the needs of the offshore wind industry – it will be a collaborative effort amongst all of California's ports.

That said – staging and integration facilities will be critical to the launch of this industry. The state's key staging and integration facilities planned at the Ports of Humboldt Bay and Long Beach require an urgent and robust funding strategy to leverage state, federal, and private investment.

Developing a collaborative port investment strategy that includes a comprehensive, long-term financial plan and analysis for offshore wind port infrastructure will ultimately help us meet our clean energy, grid reliability, and workforce development goals by responsibly developing offshore wind in California. CAPA

would like to see an actionable plan in the final AB 525 Strategic Plan to guide both public and private action and investment in the coming years.

Although upgrading port facilities for offshore wind energy development may require considerable investment, the benefits become clear when these projects are operational on a large scale. With the implementation of the state's new central procurement mechanism, offshore wind energy is expected to evolve into a dependable and cost-efficient source of clean power, complementing a variety of other clean energy options. Additionally, this initiative is poised to stimulate job creation, potentially generating thousands of new employment opportunities within the state. CAPA looks forward to continued collaboration to realize this opportunity.

Sincerely,



Martha Miller
Executive Director
California Association of Port Authorities