Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–3302

July 21, 2026

Mr. Harry Sideris
President and Chief Executive Officer
Duke Energy Corporation
525 South Tryon Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

Dear Mr. Sideris:

We write to request information regarding your company's decision to terminate its participation in the Carolina Long Bay offshore wind lease and the circumstances surrounding the termination agreement signed with the Interior Department.

As reported in June, Duke Energy struck a deal with the Interior Department to surrender its lease for a wind farm in federal waters in the Carolina Long Bay area in exchange for $129 million, slightly less than the $155 million the Company paid for the lease in 2022.[1, 2] In recent months, multiple offshore wind projects and lease areas across the country have been canceled by the Trump administration in exchange for payouts to the leaseholders and promises to reinvest those funds into fossil fuel projects and infrastructure.[3] These payouts come on the heels of court orders halting the Trump administration's attempts to unilaterally block these projects.[4] Your company's acceptance of this payout from the Trump administration now strikes many observers as a quid pro quo.

As North Carolina's largest electric utility, Duke Energy plays an essential role in leading the state's energy future. The company's investment decisions affect electric reliability, customer costs, economic development, and North Carolina's ability to meet its long-term clean energy objectives. Duke Energy's decision to withdraw from one of the Southeast's most significant offshore wind energy projects is extremely concerning, especially given the Trump administration's efforts to dismantle renewable energy projects across the country and replace them with fossil fuel projects.

North Carolina has experienced a substantial increase in electricity demand driven by population growth, advanced manufacturing, and the expansion of energy-intensive industries. At the same time, the state has adopted policies encouraging the transition to a more diverse and lower-carbon electric system while maintaining affordable and reliable service. Offshore wind is a major component of that transition, helping increase generation capacity, lower carbon emissions, bring economic investment to coastal communities, and create thousands of construction and manufacturing jobs.

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[1] https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/29/climate/trump-offshore-wind-duke-energy.html
[2] https://www.utilitydive.com/news/duke-energy-offshore-wind-lease-for-trump-interior/824095/
[3] https://apnews.com/article/trump-offshore-wind-energy-climate-interior-invenergy-2809c57fa04b59a21927631b91b4b69f
[4] https://rhodeislandcurrent.com/briefs/boston-appeals-court-tosses-trump-memo-on-offshore-wind-letting-federal-permitting-continue/

The Carolina Long Bay project represented one of the best opportunities to develop offshore wind energy off North Carolina's coast. Your company's decision to terminate its lease will have impacts beyond this single project. It may affect future private investment, workforce development, transmission planning, and public confidence in North Carolina's ability to develop new sources of clean electricity.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that Duke Energy provide the following information no later than August 20, 2026:

1. All documents and communications referring or relating to the relinquishment of, or any potential reimbursement arrangement or related negotiations concerning, Lease No. OCS-A 0546.

2. All documents and communications referring to or relating to any funds, credits, or other benefits provided by the State of North Carolina in relation to Duke Energy's Carolina Long Bay offshore wind project.

3. All documents and communications referring to or relating to the notification, pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1334(h), of the cancellation's consistency with NEPA to North Carolina Governor Josh Stein.

4. All documents and communications referring to or relating to any hearing conducted on whether the lease cancellation was conducted pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1334(a)(2).

5. All documents and communications referring to or relating to any due diligence or assessments conducted by Duke Energy regarding the legal propriety of using the Judgment Fund as the funding source for their settlement.

6. The total amount of investment by Duke Energy to develop the Carolina Long Bay Project, beyond the cost of the lease itself.
    a. Please include a description of the actions taken to acquire all required federal permits including, but not limited to, the Construction and Operations Plan (COP) and the Site Assessment Plan (SAP).

By caving to the Trump administration's hostility towards offshore wind development, your company appears to be sending a clear message to North Carolinians that Duke Energy prioritizes currying the President's favor over providing clean, affordable energy to your customers. We hope this is not the case.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress

Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress