



## Testimony of Carlos Garcia

### Energy Planner

### New York City Environmental Justice Alliance,

### PEAK Coalition

New York City Council Committee Environmental Protection

Oversight Hearing: Offshore Wind Power

November 24th, 2020

Good morning, Chairperson Constantinides and members Levin, Menchaca, Ulrich, and Yeger. My name is Carlos Garcia, and on behalf of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance (NYC-EJA), I am here to testify in support of the continued development of offshore wind in and around New York City.

Founded in 1991, NYC-EJA is a non-profit city-wide membership network linking 11 grassroots organizations from low-income neighborhoods and communities of color in their struggle for environmental justice.

NYC-EJA has a long history in the fight for the development of renewable energy in New York City and State. From its instrumental role in passing the state's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act to our more recent efforts in providing technical expertise to the PEAK coalition. NYC-EJA has always prioritized New York's fight for environmental justice over expediency or "the easy route."

Looking at the role continued offshore wind development will have on New York's energy sector, its positive community externalities reveal a win-win for New York's fight for environmental justice and resiliency.

From an electrical grid standpoint, the interconnection of offshore wind in Sunset Park and other environmental justice communities throughout New York will provide a vital supply of energy to offset the projected increased energy load that will offset the need for peaking power plants.

A real-world example of this is currently under consideration in Brooklyn. Like most of the environmental justice communities in New York City, Sunset Park is considered a "load pocket." A load pocket is an area where there is insufficient transmission capacity to reliably supply 100% of the electric load without relying on generation capacity that is physically located within that area. According to the New York Independent System Operator's (NYISO) newly released *Reliability Needs Assessment* report, released six days ago, the Astoria East/Corona 138 kV and Greenwood/Fox Hills 138 kV Transmission Load Areas (which feed in and out of Sunset Park) are expected to see an energy deficiency of over 10 hours (totaling 659 MWh) on a peak day in 2023 and an energy deficiency of over 14 hours (totaling 3,571 MWh) over a 14 hour period on a peak day in 2025 respectively. Simply put, the NYISO believes that there is not enough energy to meet the ever-increasing demand for energy in south Brooklyn. Combine this with the aggressive electrification and electric vehicle targets New York City has committed to, New York City may face a larger problem than anticipated.



While NYC-EJA and our allies have identified this problem and are working on numerous novel solutions to this problem, the unique building typology and ownership structures of Brooklyn only compounds the difficulty of developing in city renewable energy generation within load pockets. This is where offshore wind comprises of a unique and invaluable characteristic: Its ability to interconnect massive amounts of energy into energy deficient areas. Equinor, through its Empire Wind project, has proposed feeding into the Gowanus substation located in Sunset Park. This injection of clean, renewable energy, coupled with intentional energy efficiency, demand response, and resiliency programs will provide sunset park and environmental justice areas throughout NYC, the necessary tools to efficiently and safely decouple for polluting fossil fuel infrastructure and increase local resiliency.

NYC-EJA looks forward to continued collaborations with the City, State, and energy advocates in our fight for a cleaner, more equitable Just Transition.