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February 15, 2005

Ms. Marion C. Blakey, Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Blakey:

I want to thank the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and your New England Regional Office for keeping me informed of the FAA's review of offshore wind farms, its assessment of the Cape Wind project, and impacts on radar systems.

I am following up specifically on a recent finding and determination by Nancy Kalinowski, the FAA's Director of System Operations Airspace and Aeronautical Information Management. In her analysis, the FAA made the following finding:

"The proposed location of the (Cape Wind Project) wind turbines is *in an area which may affect existing radar facilities supporting the National Airspace System*. Two of these radars are used to support terminal surveillance services at Nantucket Memorial Airport and at the Otis Air National Guard Base. The third is a long range radar used to support enroute surveillance services from North Truro, located in the northern portion of the Cape Cod National Seashore and is jointly utilized by the FAA and the Department of Defense." Ms. Kalinowski also stated the FAA "has reviewed the British studies, and has *begun its own comprehensive research on this matter.*"

I am interested in the status of the FAA's own comprehensive investigations and its assessment of the British studies conducted by their Ministry of Defense and its Coast Guard. It is my understanding that in the aftermath of the British studies, government authorities identified a number of issues and consequently established safety standards to protect the performance of marine and air navigation radar systems. Last year, it was reported that the British government was disapproving a significant number of the proposed wind farms projects because of radar

interference issues. Our Defense Department is aware of these findings, and at a briefing last month expressed to me similar concerns. According to initial Air Force investigations, radar tracking performance can be degraded near offshore wind farms. As a result, Air Force officials are now taking a more thorough review of radar impacts and will hopefully identify steps, if any, that may be taken to mitigate these problems. The Pentagon has also expressed to me an interest in establishing a DOD Action Team to participate in future investigations.

As you know, federal agencies are not alone in expressing an interest in these radar interference problems. Several Massachusetts officials and organizations, identifying public safety and radar interference as a major reason, have also expressed concern or outright opposition to offshore wind farms off Cape Cod. Some of these officials and organizations include: the Barnstable Municipal Airport, the Martha's Vineyard Airport, the Nantucket Airport, and the FAA Air Traffic Controllers. Given the concerns expressed by each of these organizations, it is important that we fully analyze these impacts and establish needed safety standards.

Since officials from the United States Coast Guard have also expressed to me an interest in the outcome of these reviews, it might be appropriate to establish an intergovernmental radar safety working group to share information among all of the various federal agencies investigating these issues. Each agency could collaborate on their investigations, coordinate their reviews of the British studies, and jointly develop safety standards and regulatory guidelines that could provide guidance to the Interior Department's Minerals Management Service (MMS) as they develop standards for development and lease of federal waters for offshore wind farms.

I hope you will call on me if I can be of any help to the FAA in bringing these questions and concerns to a resolution. In the meantime, I welcome the opportunity to be briefed on the status of the FAA's comprehensive review of radar impacts on offshore wind farm projects.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Delahunt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

William Delahunt

CC:

Ms. Amy Lind Corbett, FAA, New England Regional Administrator