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Great Lakes Wind Can Invigorate Wisconsin's Economy Stakeholder meeting explores the promise of Great Lakes wind development

Madison, WI – Today, decision makers, community members, utilities, developers, and advocacy groups met in Madison for a stakeholder meeting about the promise offshore wind in the Great Lakes.

“Great opportunities await Wisconsin in the form of an incredible natural resource – the winds of Lake Michigan right here on our shores,” explains Mary Ann Christopher, a partner at Michael Best & Friedrich in Milwaukee and member of the Great Lakes Wind Collaborative. “Europe and Asia are leading the way with almost 4,000 MW of off-shore wind in operation and almost 6,000 MW more under construction. Wisconsin can follow suit, bringing jobs, investments, and clean energy home by developing offshore wind in the Great Lakes.”

Experts from both sides of Lake Michigan gathered to discuss how we can responsibly develop offshore wind while reaping economic benefits.

“Offshore wind development in the Great Lakes and off the Atlantic Coast is likely to create jobs in Wisconsin in manufacturing, shipbuilding, boat building, wind farm construction, port operations, and maintenance of offshore wind farms,” noted Bob Owen, an energy consultant from Middleton. “Wisconsin's breadth of relevant manufacturing and wind construction expertise is unparalleled in the Great Lakes Region. Wisconsin could be a leader in freshwater offshore wind technology and related employment.”

Eight developments are currently being developed along the Atlantic coast and one project is slated in Ohio on Lake Erie.

“Offshore wind offers the scale of clean, renewable energy that we need to transition to a clean energy economy,” concluded Jennifer Feyerherm of the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign. “By getting into the industry early, Wisconsin can tap into our manufacturing heritage and lead the way in creating good, family supporting jobs while cleaning up our air and water.”

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