



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Frank G. Jackson

Build Cleveland's wind farm:

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By Mayor Frank G. Jackson

Greater Cleveland has the potential to become the national leader in the growing renewable energy economy because of local efforts to develop the first freshwater wind farm in the country. Lake Erie Energy Development Corporation (LEEDco) is working to develop this project, which would create a projected 600 initial jobs and the potential for 8,000 long-term wind energy jobs, according to Nor-Tech. This would support Ohio's existing wind energy supply chain that already boasts more than 100 companies and it would offer opportunities for new businesses to begin.

The City of Cleveland fully supports the creation of this offshore wind farm. We have signed a memorandum of understanding to help move the project forward and Cleveland Public Power is geared up to purchase 20% of the energy created by the wind farm.

The City supports this project on its own merits and because of what it represents – a vision of our regional economy as a national leader in renewable energy and a major economic growth sector. For this vision to become a reality, our entire community needs to rally behind LEEDco and the offshore wind farm.

This will require that we – both the private sector and the public sector – set aside our own, short-term self-interests and focus on the long-term benefits to our economy, our workforce and our community. These benefits include: investment opportunities in a growing industry; new jobs, both short-term construction jobs and long-term jobs in the wind energy supply chain; increased availability of alternative energy; and a smaller impact on our environment and natural resources.

We should not be focused solely on short-term profits or politics. Such a short-term focus would ensure that greater Cleveland falls further and further behind in terms of economic competitiveness.

Today's successful economies are globally competitive and are increasingly focused on sustainability – not just in terms of green industry, but in terms of building an

economy that can withstand changes in the global marketplace. I launched Sustainable Cleveland 2019 two years ago to help build such a globally competitive economy.

SC 2019 has gained widespread business and government support since its beginning. It is based on the concept that our entire community – both public and private entities – should work together to support sustainable businesses and sustainable business practices. In doing so, we will build a sustainable economy – one that creates investment opportunities, creates jobs and is focused on the economy of the future. The offshore wind farm is a perfect example of the type of opportunity that SC 2019 is all about.

By building the wind farm, we will have both a concrete project that will create jobs and a powerful symbol of what our economy is capable of becoming. These types of opportunities don't come along every day. When opportunities like the wind farm are created, we cannot afford to waste them.

As I mentioned earlier, the City of Cleveland has made the decision to support this project. Now, our public and private partners need to make the decision to support it as well. Failure to do so will spell failure for the wind farm and stall our region's economic rebirth.

If we don't take advantage of this opportunity, someone else will. Some other city will build the first offshore wind farm. Some other region will create thousands of new green collar jobs. Some other state will reap the benefits of a strong wind energy supply chain.

Let's be clear: Decisions must be made about moving forward with the wind farm. It will help put Cleveland on the map as leader in sustainability. It is the type of project that will help shape our regional economy, both now and in the future and that is why this project and the decisions that must be made surrounding it are so important.