



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
House of Representatives
State House, Boston 02133-1054

TODD M. SMOLA
REPRESENTATIVE
1ST HAMPDEN DISTRICT

BRIMFIELD • HOLLAND • PALMER
STURBRIDGE • WALES • WARE • WARREN

STATE HOUSE, ROOM 124
TEL. (617) 722-2100
FAX: (617) 722-2390

www.reptoddsmla.org
Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov
Conor.Welch@mahouse.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 4, 2016

Contact: Conor Welch
617-722-2100

Representative Smola supports passage of omnibus energy diversification bill

BOSTON – Representative Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means) is supporting omnibus legislation to diversify the Commonwealth’s renewable energy portfolio through the expanded procurement of offshore wind and hydroelectric power.

House Bill 4568, *An Act to promote energy diversity*, was approved by the House of Representatives on a 157-1 vote on July 31. The bill represents a compromise between differing versions of the energy bill that were previously approved by the House and Senate.

If the bill is signed by Governor Charlie Baker, the state would be required to enter into long-term contracts for the procurement of a combined 2,800 megawatts of offshore wind power and hydroelectric power over the next 15-20 years.

“The passage of this legislation marks an important step forward in the state’s ongoing efforts to invest in more clean and renewable energy resources,” said Representative SMOLA. “The provisions contained in this bill will lead to a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and the Commonwealth’s reliance on fossil fuels.”

House Bill 4568 requires each distribution company to jointly conduct competitive proposals for offshore wind generation and to procure 1,600 megawatts by June 30, 2027. The first solicitation must be for a minimum of 400 megawatts and occur no later than June 30, 2017.

The bill also requires each distribution company to solicit proposals for hydroelectricity through a staggered procurement process that will yield 9,450,000 megawatt-hours of clean energy by December 31, 2022 – the equivalent of 1,200 megawatts. The Department of Energy Resources will review both the offshore wind and hydroelectricity proposals to ensure that the energy generating resources are reliable, contribute to reducing winter electricity price spikes, are cost-effective for the state’s ratepayers, and take into account the potential economic and environmental benefits for ratepayers.

The changes included in the omnibus energy bill will help offset the projected loss of more than 10,000 megawatts of power due in part to the closing of the Pilgrim nuclear power plant in Plymouth. The plant is scheduled to be decommissioned next year and to cease operation by May of 2019.

In anticipation of the 2019 closing, House Bill 4568 creates a citizens advisory panel to advise the Governor, members of the Legislature, state agencies and the general public on issues related to the plant’s decommissioning and closing. The advisory panel will be required to hold a minimum of four public hearings each year until Pilgrim closes, and will file an annual report.

The bill also:

- requires MassDevelopment to establish a commercial sustainable energy program so commercial property owners and manufacturers can access low-cost financing to improve their facilities and reduce their energy consumption;
- directs the Department of Public Utilities and the Department of Environmental Protection to investigate and establish criteria for identifying and repairing Grade 3 gas leaks;
- includes an energy storage system mandate to help electric companies reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce demand peak and improve reliability; and
- establishes a carbon reduction research center within the University of Massachusetts campus system.

For additional information please contact Representative Smola at Todd.Smola@mahouse.gov or (617)722-2100.

###