

RECHARGE

November 30, 2022

'Build up – and right' | New US offshore wind advocacy body launches to speed first 100GW

Stephanie McClellan, chief of US offshore wind advocacy body Turn Forward.

Photo: Turn Forward



Led by industry veteran Stephanie McClellan, Turn Forward aims to work with federal and state governments to devise a plan by 2025 for accelerated deployment with 'game-changing' benefits to American workers, communities, and marine and coastal resources

By [Darius Snieckus](#)

A new US advocacy body has been launched to spearhead a civil society-minded national agenda for American offshore wind power that answers the country's current climate, economic, equity and environmental challenges.

The organisation, Turn Forward, to be led by sector veteran Stephanie McClellan, aims to work with the federal and state governments to create a plan by 2025 for construction of 100GW-plus of sea-based plant, along “with strong policies in place to maximise benefits to communities and workers and ensure environmental protections as the renewable energy source is developed”.

“Offshore wind is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for this country,” said McClellan, who founded the Special Initiative on Offshore Wind, which helped create the original policy pipeline for offshore wind power in the US, and until this summer was in [a senior role at developer Simply Blue Energy](#).

“It brings game-changing potential to increase clean, domestic energy production over the next decade, a critical component of America's climate strategy.

“The industrial-scale development needed to build this resource can create an enormous number of enduring jobs, while helping transform communities that have borne the brunt of our historic reliance on fossil fuels,” added McClellan.

Turn Forward's board of advisors includes Eddie Ahn, executive director of Brightline Defense; Mike Fishman, executive director of the Climate Jobs National Resource Center; Collin O'Mara, CEO of the National Wildlife Federation; and Manish Bapna, CEO of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Ahn stated: “As we look toward the federal offshore wind auction for lease areas off California's coast next week, with more coming in the Gulf and on the east coast, it's clear the time is right for Turn Forward to enter the scene.

“Offshore wind's ability to help address climate change in the near term may be unmatched, but those high expectations come with tremendous responsibility.”

O'Mara said: “We all have a role to play in making certain that responsibly-developed offshore wind fulfills its potential and helps us reach our climate goals, while protecting wildlife, engaging communities, and supporting well-paying careers every step of the way.”

The launch of Turn Forward, which will operate as an independent nonprofit, was accompanied by a poll commissioned from Nexus Polling, which found 70% of a sample of residents surveyed along the east, west and Gulf coasts of the US support expanding offshore wind energy, with “majorities seeing it as beneficial for addressing climate change and improving the economy”.

“Turn Forward will undertake a collaborative and comprehensive advocacy effort to make sure that the necessary policies, education and ground-level enthusiasm are in place to get this incredible resource built up – and built right,” said McClellan.

“Our goal is to raise awareness of the transformational potential of offshore wind and work with allies across the country to drive actions that capture the potential of the unique opportunity in our midst.”

Fishman said: “Communities at the frontlines of the fossil-fuel economy could experience revitalisation from offshore wind.

“Across the country, unions are advancing a powerful pro-worker vision for offshore wind. The sheer scale and geographic potential of offshore wind in the US calls for a domestic supply chain powered by millions of union jobs that revitalises communities and reverses inequality.”

Bapna stated: “Offshore wind is not just good for the environment – it’s good for our economy.

“When developed properly, offshore wind power can create well-paying jobs and help underserved communities hardest hit by our reliance on fossil fuels without endangering ocean ecosystems.”

In 2021, the Biden administration set a “national goal” to **develop 30GW of offshore wind plant in US waters by 2030**. Installing this gigawattage at sea would create some 77,000 jobs in industry and surrounding communities, generate electricity to power over 10 million homes, and cut 78 million tons of CO2 emissions, by Washington’s calculations.

Presently, 42MW of wind turbines are installed off the US, with the country’s first utility-scale project, the 800MW **Vineyard Wind 1, having recently begun laying its export cable**.