

**Why vote to approve Article 15?**  
**Prepared by the Article 15 Petitioners**

1. Article 15 does not seek approval of an offshore wind project to make landfall in Falmouth. It merely asks Town Meeting to vote in favor of allowing companies to explore the feasibility of bringing cables ashore through soil testing.
2. The soil testing will be conducted manually over a matter of weeks, and the site will be restored to its original or better state. If permitted and built, nothing except a manhole cover will be seen on the surface.
3. Falmouth citizens should understand the potential economic and environmental costs and benefits to the Town before rejecting the project, and that starts with soil testing. Recently Barnstable Town entered into a Host Community Agreement allowing landfall at one of their beaches. Their experience shows that a collaborative and productive interaction with offshore wind development can be a positive benefit to the community.
4. Denying a wind company access to conduct testing is a premature rejection of what could be a valuable resource for Falmouth, and impedes the Commonwealth's goal of achieving net zero by 2050 with affordable and reliable renewable energy sources.
5. In approving the most recent Purchased Power Agreements ("PPAS") for off-shore wind in December 2022, the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities found that 1605 MW of wind energy would save Massachusetts ratepayers \$1.28 billion over the lives of the projects.
6. Falmouth is on the front lines in the fight against global warming. Do we want to be the town that refuses to do our fair share even when we will be severely impacted by sea-level rise and coastal flooding? We petitioners hope not. Our town has an obligation to make decisions based on science while representing the interests of the entire town, with future generations in mind.

Recently Town Meeting Members received an email purporting to set forth reasons why they should just vote "NO" on Article 15. A quick fact check of that document lays bare many overstatements and misrepresentations.

**ARTICLE 15: THE FACTS**

1. The Claim: **Article 15 is an "invitation" for companies like SouthCoast Wind (aka Mayflower Wind/Shell Oil) to use its arsenal of resources to bypass our local government.**

The Facts: Article 15 merely requests that the Town Meeting vote in favor of allowing soil testing to fully evaluate potential sites. Article 15 is advisory and does not seek to bypass the Select Board. The Select Board will still need to approve any request to conduct soil testing.

2. The Claim: Article 15 allows all wind farm developers to soil test in any precinct in Falmouth.

The Facts: Article 15 requests that Town Meeting inform the Select Board of its desire to allow wind developers to conduct soil testing in Falmouth in order that the developers and Town may make an informed decision about the siting of any proposed interconnection or cable. A developer will still need the approval of any property owner to conduct such testing, including the Select Board if the request involves Town property.

3. The Claim: SouthCoast Wind, LLC has filed residential zoning exemptions with the state, thus turning residentially zoned into industrial areas without town approval.

The Facts: Like all projects of this type, SouthCoast Wind's application to the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board ("EFSB") includes a requests for certain zoning exemptions, which exemptions: i) are primarily related to the converter stations; ii) have not been granted; and iii) do not transform residentially zoned property into industrially zoned property. State law requires the EFSB to approve the siting of energy facilities and ensure they have minimized environmental and social impacts.

4. The Claim: SouthCoast Wind, LLC also seeks the town's assistance in obtaining relief from Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution that establishes a right to a clean environment including its natural, scenic, historical, and aesthetic qualities for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

The Facts: True. The Article 97 process will ensure a full vetting of local interest by requiring the Town Meeting to approve the project crossing certain Town property, and then requiring a vote of the state legislature. The opponents seek to kill the project by not even allowing soil testing and a full investigation of the siting options.

5. The Claim: SouthCoast Wind, LLC has taken eight months to answer a partial list of questions that were asked by the public in June of 2022.

The Facts: True. We make no excuses for the developers being late with their homework. We note, however, that most of those questions could have been answered by reviewing the project's extensive filings submitted to the EFSB in November 2021.

6. The Claim: SouthCoast Wind, LLC has yet to file a new plan to the state which was promised in the fall of 2022.

The Facts: True. The offshore wind facilities are very large capital projects that typically encounter delays in navigating the gauntlet of local, state and federal approvals. Denying access for soil testing only contributes to those delays.

7. The Claim: Current proposed electrical substations, consuming some 26 acres, will be located in one of two areas in Precincts 2 & 6 and directly near our town water supply.

The Facts: True. As detailed in the EFSB filing, these facilities will include a containment system capable of capturing any fluids and will comply with the Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasures regulations. The Town will continue to regularly test, purify and treat the water from Long Pond.

8. The Claim: Clean energy is an important factor in saving our land and homes for future generations, but it needs to be done intelligently and with the input of the public under the guidance of our elected officials. Alternative sites should be explored and all discussions concerning the plans of wind farm developers need to be transparent. Decisions and negotiations should be in the hands of Falmouth's elected officials with input from an informed electorate and not in the boardrooms of billion-dollar foreign companies.

The Facts: Offshore wind projects undergo extensive public scrutiny at the local, state and federal level to ensure full evaluation of environmental, health and safety impacts and mitigation, and to prevent special interests from blocking projects that are in the greater public good. The siting of the transmission lines and route selection is fully disclosed in public filings and the EFSB must review and approve not only environmental impacts and mitigation, but also the need for and cost of the proposed facilities and alternatives, including alternate routes or sites for ancillary structures and transmission lines. The Town of Falmouth should not forgo a full evaluation of the costs and benefits of a renewable energy project by denying simple soil testing that presents no threat or harm to any residents.

**Do the right thing for all Falmouth residents.**

**Vote YES on Article 15**

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