

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

PRE-FILED DIRECT TESTIMONY OF  
NICHOLAS S. UCCI  
ON BEHALF OF THE  
RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF ENERGY RESOURCES

APRIL 5, 2019

1 **Q. Please state your name and business address.**

2 A. My name is Nicholas S. Ucci. My business address is One Capitol Hill, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
3 Providence, Rhode Island.

4 **Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

5 A. I serve as the Deputy Commissioner of Energy for the Rhode Island Office of Energy  
6 Resources (OER).

7 **Q. Please describe your professional background and education.**

8 A. I have been employed by the State of Rhode Island for approximately seventeen years and  
9 have spent the last decade of my career working on energy issues in several different roles.  
10 As Deputy Commissioner of Energy at OER, I support the development and  
11 implementation of state policies, programs, and regulatory proposals that advance the  
12 energy, economic, and environmental interests of Rhode Island in a sustainable, cost-  
13 effective manner. Of note, I have served as the Administration's lead on recent competitive  
14 clean energy procurement initiatives, such as the three-state (RI-MA-CT) clean energy  
15 RFP (PUC Docket #4764); a 400 MW-target renewable energy RFP, with bids now under  
16 evaluation (PUC Docket #4822); and the procurement efforts underling this docket, #4929.  
17 I have also represented the Administration and advanced state policy interests on a wide  
18 variety of energy and electric wholesale market issues, working closely with other New  
19 England energy officials and various stakeholder bodies. Prior to my service as Deputy  
20 Commissioner, I was OER's Chief of Staff.  
21 Between 2008 and 2014, I was employed by the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission  
22 (PUC or Commission) as Principal Policy Analyst and Energy Facility Siting Board  
23 Coordinator. In that role I served as energy advisor and legislative/policy liaison;

1 represented the Commission before state, regional and federal agencies/organizations,  
2 including the Independent System Operator of New England (ISO-NE); supported the  
3 Commission in reviewing electricity-related regulatory filings; and helped oversee  
4 implementation of the state's Renewable Energy Standard.

5 I have a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Political Science, with a concentration in public  
6 policy, and a Graduate Certificate in Labor Relations from the University of Rhode Island  
7 (URI). I also have a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in Economics and Political Science  
8 from URI.

9 **Q. What is OER's agency mission?**

10 A. OER is Rhode Island's lead state agency on energy policy and programs. The mission of  
11 OER is to lead Rhode Island to a secure, cost-effective, and sustainable energy future. OER  
12 works closely with private and public stakeholders to increase the reliability and security  
13 of our energy supply, reduce energy costs and mitigate price volatility, and improve  
14 environmental quality.

15 **Q. What is OER's role in this proceeding?**

16 A. On February 7, 2019, pursuant to the Affordable Clean Energy Security Act (ACES), R.I.  
17 Gen. Laws § 39-31-1 et seq, Narragansett Electric Company, d/b/a National Grid, filed a  
18 proposed twenty (20) year Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) between it and DWW Rev I,  
19 LLC, also known as the Revolution Wind offshore wind project developed by Ørsted U.S.  
20 Offshore Wind (Ørsted).

21 In accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 39-31-6(a)(1)(vi)(A)(III), OER is required to "provide  
22 an advisory opinion on the expected energy security, reliability, environmental, and  
23 economic impacts resulting from the contract(s)."

1 As detailed in OER's advisory opinion, National Grid consulted with OER in a multi-state  
2 competitive market procurement of domestic, renewable offshore wind resources issued to  
3 the marketplace on June 29, 2017 pursuant to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Act  
4 to Promote Energy Diversity, Section 83C (the 83C RFP or procurement). During the  
5 Massachusetts solicitation process, OER and representatives from the Massachusetts  
6 Department of Energy Resources (MA DOER) discussed opportunities for mutually  
7 beneficial cooperation between the states, subject to the limitations established in the 83C  
8 RFP and consistent with Rhode Island's statutory authorization under ACES.

9 **Q: Did OER receive the advice and support of an expert energy market consultant?**

10 A: Yes. As described in the advisory opinion, OER joined with the Rhode Island Division of  
11 Public Utilities & Carriers (DPUC) to engage expert consultant services independent from  
12 the utility, potential bidders, and other consulting firms utilized in the Massachusetts  
13 evaluation process. OER and DPUC sought a consultant that could objectively provide  
14 detailed analysis and guidance throughout the procurement process; review modeling  
15 inputs, assumptions, and results; advise on potential procurement opportunities for Rhode  
16 Island and its consumers; and support any subsequent regulatory action. Power Advisory  
17 LLC, led by Mr. John Dalton, was retained to conduct this work. Power Advisory LLC  
18 specializes in electricity market analysis and strategy, power procurement, policy  
19 development, regulatory and litigation support, market design and project feasibility  
20 assessments. The company has a strong understanding of the offshore wind industry and  
21 its potential role in addressing Southern New England's clean energy requirements.

22 **Q: Please summarize OER's findings on the proposed Revolution Wind PPA.**

23 A: As detailed in the advisory opinion, OER finds that the proposed contract will reduce long-

1 term energy costs for local ratepayers; enhance energy reliability and security; reduce  
2 carbon emissions in the electric sector; grow clean energy jobs; and foster millions of  
3 dollars in new investment throughout the Rhode Island economy. The totality of these  
4 energy, economic, and environmental benefits far exceed the proposed costs associated  
5 with this project. Moreover, OER notes that the project was solicited as the result of a  
6 commercially-reasonable, competitive, multi-state procurement effort for an eligible clean  
7 energy resource, consistent with the requirements of ACES; offers contract terms and  
8 pricing that are commercially reasonable; and has a credible project operation date.  
9 Finally, OER reviewed Revolution Wind for consistency with the Rhode Island State  
10 Energy Plan (Energy 2035), the Resilient Rhode Island Act, and the goals enumerated in  
11 PUC Docket #4600. OER finds that the project advances these important policy and  
12 regulatory paradigms.

13 **Q: Do you adopt OER's advisory opinion as your own testimony?**

14 A: Yes.

15 **Q: Does this conclude your testimony?**

16 A: Yes.