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## **Quonset ramps up to be leader in Rhode Island wind energy - by Steven King**

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Quonset Development Corp.

As the operators of the Northeast's premier business park, Quonset Development Corporation (QDC) is the leading engine of job creation and economic development in Rhode Island. Today, QDC is preparing to spur even further growth by attracting companies with highly-skilled jobs and providing them with world-class infrastructure, an investment in their future success. The growing wind energy industry was on full display in Rhode Island as the country's first offshore wind farm was completed in 2016, just off the coast of Block Island. Quonset Business Park played a key role in the development of the Block Island project.

Various wind turbine components arrived in Rhode Island via Quonset's Port of Davisville, including steel jackets and over 28 miles of cable. In addition, Quonset served as the principal port for the project's heavy installation vessels over a two-year span, and Quonset-based companies participated in every aspect of the project's construction. No one port in the northeast has enough space to receive or process all the components of a wind farm project. We're glad to have our neighbor, ProvPort, also making dedicated ongoing preparations for this work.

With over 200 companies and nearly 12,000 workers at Quonset, the park is continuously looking to stimulate further economic growth and job creation in the state. Rhode Island governor, Gina Raimondo has set an ambitious clean energy goal of 1,000 MW of clean energy by 2020.

The ongoing renovations of Pier 2 at Quonset's Port of Davisville will be instrumental in creating the necessary infrastructure for continued offshore wind efforts. Gov. Raimondo's \$90 million modernization plan for Pier 2, the "workhorse" of the port, was approved by voters in 2016. The plan will increase the port's overall capacity with an added third berth. These updates will enable Davisville to continue growing its record-breaking auto import business, while expanding its role in the wind industry.

Quonset company, Specialty Diving Services, played a unique role in the construction of the Block Island Wind Farm. Divers performed welding, poured concrete, laid cable and built cofferdams for the Block Island project. Specialty Diving Services has the expertise and experience to assist wind

energy companies in the construction of larger projects and they are conveniently located right at the park.

With several offshore wind projects in the late stages of approval, Quonset is positioned to be the state's leader in clean energy by facilitating the construction of these multi-billion dollar projects.

Modern ports are the key to growing the industry, according to wind energy industry leaders. Ongoing Pier 2 updates are essential to moving our state closer to Gov. Raimondo's clean energy goal, alleviating the effects of climate change and continuing Quonset's leading role in New England's wind industry. Renewable energy, including offshore wind, is the future of energy generation in Rhode Island and beyond. The QDC is prepared to welcome offshore wind companies through the Port of Davisville and assist them in bringing clean energy to the region. "First class jobs go to places with first class infrastructure," said Gov. Raimondo when first proposing the Pier 2 modernization plan.

Access to our world-class infrastructure, qualified workers and the Port of Davisville streamline the process for wind energy companies looking to expand to the Northeast region. The QDC and Port of Davisville are equipped to lead the charge in wind energy here in Rhode Island.

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