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## **Quonset investment will make Rhode Island a renewable leader - by senator Alana DiMario and representative Julie Casimiro**

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Senator Alana DiMario

Representative Julie Casimiro

Representing the people of North Kingstown in the R.I. General Assembly is a great honor. It also gives us a chance to work with the team at the Quonset Business Park, a key statewide economic asset that is in our districts.

Spread across 3,200 acres on two former Navy bases, Quonset is a real R.I. success story. Home to over 200 companies and 12,900 jobs, the Quonset Business Park generates \$1.3 billion in household income for Rhode Island families every year with wages 19% higher than the state average. Quonset's Port of Davisville hosts one of the Top 10 auto importers in North America and played a major role in supporting the construction of the country's first offshore wind farm off Block Island.

As R.I. sets ambitious renewable energy goals to combat climate change, we were pleased to see governor Dan McKee take an important step towards meeting those goals and maintaining R.I.'s leadership in wind energy with his recent proposal to invest \$60 million of ARPA funds at Quonset's Port of Davisville. These funds will preserve thousands of existing jobs at the port while positioning R.I. for the wind energy jobs of the future. With this investment in the Port Master Plan, R.I. can continue to be a leader in the offshore wind industry. The opportunity is great, and there's a lot of work to do – while Block Island produces 30 megawatts of power, off-shore projects proposed from Cape Cod to New Jersey envision generating 2,510 megawatts of clean renewable energy.

Quonset's experience and proven record of success supporting wind energy development is reflected in its role supporting the development of Deepwater Wind's Block Island project. Steel jackets for the turbines and more than 28 miles of undersea cable arrived in R.I. at Quonset, as well as other component parts. The Quonset Business Park also served as the principle port for the project's heavy installation vessels for two years while Quonset-based companies supported every aspect of the project's construction. Meanwhile, the pieces of almost every land-based wind turbine in R.I. crossed the pier at Davisville.

The \$60 million investment proposed in the state's FY 2023 budget will fund critical upgrades at the port, supporting off-shore wind logistics, including transportation of the heavier cargo that off-shore wind projects require. The investment will support a variety of projects at the port, including the rehabilitation of 80-year old Pier 1 and new dock space to support Crew Transfer Vessels and Support Offshore Vessels. Landside improvements, including the construction of a new multi-purpose pier at Terminal 5, will be included as well. This added capacity will not only support offshore wind construction but will also allow our successful international automobile import business to continue to thrive.

Strategic investments in Quonset and the Port of Davisville have paid enormous dividends in the past, and are crucial to Rhode Island's economic and environmental future. That's why we support the governor's proposal to invest \$60 million at Davisville which will not only build on Rhode Island's "first in the water" advantage, but make the Ocean State a 21st Century leader in the off-shore wind industry.

State Rep. Julie Casimiro and State Sen. Alana DiMario represent North Kingstown in the Rhode Island General Assembly.

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