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AB-1417 Energy: Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Program: community capacity funding activities and grants. (2025-2026)

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Assembly Bill No. 1417

CHAPTER 397

An act to amend Sections 25992.5, 25992.10, 25992.21, and 25992.22 of the Public Resources Code, relating to offshore wind energy development, and making an appropriation therefor.

[Approved by Governor October 06, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 06, 2025.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1417, Stefani. Energy: Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Program: community capacity funding activities and grants.

Existing law establishes the Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Program, which is administered by the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission for the purpose of supporting state activities that complement and are in furtherance of federal laws related to the development of offshore wind facilities. Existing law creates, and continuously appropriates moneys in, the Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Fund in the State Treasury for purposes of the program and the Private Donations Account, which is created in the fund. Existing law authorizes the commission to accept federal and private sector moneys for purposes of the program and requires the private sector moneys to be deposited into the donations account and the federal moneys to be deposited into the fund. Existing law makes records of the donations received subject to public disclosure. Existing law requires the commission to post a report on its internet website, within 30 days of receiving a donation, with specified information regarding each donation received. Existing law authorizes the commission to allocate moneys in the fund or donations account for specified purposes, including workforce development grants.

This bill would additionally authorize the commission to allocate moneys in the fund or account for capacity funding activities and grants within local communities and tribal communities for purposes of the program. The bill would make only a local community, a local government, a California tribe, a nonprofit organization selected by California tribes to represent their interests, or a coalition of these entities eligible for these capacity funding activities and grants. By expanding the purposes for which continuously appropriated moneys may be allocated, the bill would make an appropriation.

This bill would make the public disclosure requirement described above applicable to donations received by an eligible entity from an offshore wind entity, as defined, and would require an offshore wind entity to report, every 90 days, specified information concerning these donations to the commission. The bill would delete the requirement for the commission to post a report on its internet website for donations received by the commission, as described above, and would instead require the commission to annually post a report on its internet website related to donations made by offshore wind entities to eligible entities, as specified. The bill would require the commission to annually prepare and submit a report, on or before March 1 of each year, to the Legislature on the implementation and effectiveness of the activities and grants funded pursuant to the bill.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: yes Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 25992.5 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

25992.5. For purposes of this chapter, all of the following definitions apply:

- (a) "Account" means the Private Donations Account created pursuant to Section 25992.20.
- (b) "Bureau" means the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.
- (c) "Eligible entity" means a local community, local government, California tribe, or nonprofit organization selected by California tribes to represent their interests, if the entity is geographically, culturally, or economically impacted by the offshore wind industry. A coalition of more than one of these eligible entities is also an eligible entity if each coalition member is also an eligible entity. For purposes of this subdivision, "California tribes" means California Native American tribes identified on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission or a federally recognized tribe, as defined in Section 11019.81 of the Government Code.
- (d) "Fund" means the Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Fund created pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 25992.20.
- (e) "Offshore wind entity" means any entity engaged in offshore wind energy development that meets all of the following criteria:
 - (1) Has a planned generation capacity of 50 megawatts or more.
 - (2) Engages in development activities expected to impact the coastal environment, marine environment, or human environment, as those terms are defined by Section 1331 of Title 43 of the United States Code, of the California coast or submerged lands.
 - (3) Will be required to obtain a lease, permit, or other authorization from the State Lands Commission, the California Coastal Commission, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Resources Control Board, a California regional water quality control board, the State Air Resources Board, the Public Utilities Commission, the Independent System Operator, or another state agency or local government, in connection with its development activities.
- (f) "Program" means the Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Program established pursuant to Section 25992.10.

SEC. 2. Section 25992.10 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

25992.10. (a) (1) The Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Program is hereby established to be administered by the commission for the purpose of supporting state activities that complement and are in furtherance of federal laws related to the development of offshore wind facilities, including federal laws providing for offshore wind lease conditions of the bureau. The program shall award moneys to public and private entities, including, but not limited to, state agencies, tribal entities, local governmental agencies, research institutions, and nonprofit entities, through various mechanisms, including, but not limited to, grants.

(2) Moneys from the fund and account shall be available for allocation by the commission for purposes of this chapter.

(b) The commission may allocate moneys for any of the following:

(1) Increasing the ability of state agencies to engage in postlease assessments and studies of impacts, including surveys and plans, and ongoing review of project compliance and monitoring, including administrative costs.

(2) Research facilitation and coordination, including, but not limited to, funding to support state agencies to work collaboratively with the bureau and other federal, state, and tribal entities to ensure that lessees' construction and operations plans incorporate strategies and specific plans for comprehensive monitoring and adaptive management, and to ensure that the strategies and plans are implemented appropriately, including funding to contract with technical experts to be retained by state agencies to consult and collaborate on strategies and specific plans for comprehensive monitoring and adaptive management.

(3) (A) Contracts with technical experts to assist the bureau and the state in their review of survey and sampling and analysis plans, survey data and analysis, construction and operation plans, and other planning, project development, and project implementation activities and documents.

(B) The purpose of the technical experts is to review current research on survey methodologies, monitoring approaches and technologies, adaptive management strategies, and other relevant topics for floating offshore wind, to provide the bureau

and the state with recommendations, suggested guidelines, and best practices, and to fulfill additional research needs, during all phases of floating offshore wind development and implementation with the overall goal of avoiding and minimizing impacts to coastal resources.

(4) Environmental impacts monitoring, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

(A) Collecting, analyzing, and reporting baseline and postdevelopment environmental data to assess large-scale changes and cumulative impacts to marine species, habitats, and uses from floating offshore wind development and related activities with a goal of enabling the bureau and the state to accurately assess, mitigate, and adaptively manage those impacts.

(B) Data collection at a regional scale that integrates data with information and data provided by lessees or the bureau and other relevant data to provide a comprehensive understanding of how floating offshore wind development is affecting the marine environment and coastal uses.

(5) Infrastructure readiness commitments, including, but not limited to, activities associated with the bureau's lease requirements for lessees to support infrastructure readiness, such as ports, waterfront facilities, and transmission for floating offshore wind generation facilities.

(6) Workforce development grants consistent with subdivisions (r) to (t), inclusive, of Section 14005 of the Unemployment Insurance Code and in consultation with the California Workforce Development Board.

(7) Capacity funding activities and grants within local communities and tribal communities. Grants under this paragraph are available only to eligible entities.

(c) Moneys in the fund and the account shall not be allocated by the commission to another state or local agency for that agency's costs that are otherwise recoverable from project proponents in administering a regulatory or entitlement program.

SEC. 3. Section 25992.21 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

25992.21. (a) The commission may accept federal and private sector moneys, including for purposes of financial commitments made to fulfill a lessee's bidding credits in a bureau lease sale auction, for purposes of this chapter. The private sector moneys shall be deposited into the account. The federal moneys shall be deposited into the fund.

(b) Records of the donations received by the commission, or by eligible entities from offshore wind entities, and allocations made pursuant to this chapter shall be subject to public disclosure.

(c) Every 90 days, an offshore wind entity shall report to the commission all of the following:

(1) The aggregate amount of donations made.

(2) The number of groups or tribes that received donations.

(3) The counties where those groups or tribes are based.

(4) The types of eligible entities that received a donation, including, but not limited to, whether the eligible entity is a tribe, community group, local government, or third party.

(d) For each donation made by an offshore wind entity and reported pursuant to subdivision (c), the commission shall post a report on its internet website annually. The report shall only include the following information:

(1) The total amount of donations received by eligible entities from offshore wind entities in the preceding year.

(2) The total amount of donations received by eligible entities from offshore wind entities in each county in the preceding year.

(3) The types of eligible entities that received donations from offshore wind entities in the preceding year.

(4) The number of eligible entities that received a donation from offshore wind entities in the preceding year.

(e) The commission may enter into an agreement with a donor for the purposes for which the donation may be used consistent with this chapter.

(f) Notwithstanding Section 11005 of the Government Code, the Director of Finance's approval of the donations accepted by the commission under this section is not required.

SEC. 4. Section 25992.22 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

25992.22. (a) Notwithstanding Section 10231.5 of the Government Code, on or before March 15, 2024, and each January thereafter concurrent with the submission of the Governor's Budget, the commission shall submit a report to the Legislature and the relevant policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature on the moneys received and allocated pursuant to this chapter. The report shall include, but not be limited to, a description and information on the use of funds, geographic distribution of allocated funds, program activities, and awardees.

(b) Notwithstanding Section 10231.5 of the Government Code, the commission shall annually prepare and submit, on or before March 1 of each year, a report to the Legislature on the implementation and effectiveness of the capacity funding activities and grants described in paragraph (7) of subdivision (b) of Section 25992.10, including the amount of activity and grant moneys provided by offshore wind entities, using information provided by offshore wind entities, local communities, local governments, and tribes. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the total amount of capacity funding activity and grant moneys awarded for purposes of those activities and grants, a description of the activities and grants funded, and an assessment of the impact of the funding.

(c) The report submitted to the Legislature pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be submitted in accordance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.