



CONGRESSWOMAN JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN

PUERTO RICO - AT LARGE

**Testimony on H.R. 1689 – *Offshore Wind for Territories Act*
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources
Rep. Jenniffer González-Colón
Tuesday, June 22, 2021**

Chairman Grijalva and Ranking Member Westerman, thank you for the opportunity to testify on my bill, H.R. 1689, the *Offshore Wind for Territories Act*.

This bipartisan legislation would apply the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to the submerged lands off the five U.S. territories for renewable energy purposes. It further requires the Secretary of the Interior—in consultation with appropriate federal and local stakeholders—to study the potential for offshore wind energy development in these federal waters off the territories. Should a study determine that a wind lease is viable, the Secretary is directed to conduct a lease sale.

By allowing us to tap into potential offshore wind resources, H.R. 1689 would help the territories address high energy costs, diversify our fuel sources, and end our reliance on foreign petroleum imports. In Fiscal Year 2020, for instance, only 2.5% of Puerto Rico’s electricity came from renewables.

The bill would also guarantee each territory a state-equivalent share of all royalty payments made to the federal government by offshore wind developers. Territories would receive 37.5% of qualifying revenues, consistent with the revenue sharing structure established for the Gulf Coast States under GOMESA.

Lastly, H.R. 1689 directs that 12.5% of revenues be desposited into a Coral Reef Conservation Fund, thus providing dedicated funding for coral reef conservation efforts at no additional cost to the American taxpayer.

Last Congress, this Committee passed a previous version of the *Offshore Wind for Territories Act* with unanimous support. Similarly, in the 115th Congress, the House approved this legislation under suspension.

If enacted, the *Offshore Wind for Territories Act* would boost revenues, provide Americans in the territories access to cleaner, renewable energy sources, and help protect our coral reefs. I therefore hope we can once again work in a bipartisan manner to move H.R. 1689 out of Committee and finally get it across the finish line.

Thank you, I yield back.