

Letter: A Step in the Right Direction

Posted Jun. 28, 2016 at 6:30 PM

To the editor,

Massachusetts became a leader for the nation yet again when the House passed its version of a clean energy bill on June 8th.

The bill mandates the Commonwealth to allow for 1,200 megawatts of offshore wind energy. This is the largest commitment to offshore wind from any state. However, research from the University of Delaware shows that for Massachusetts, 2000 MW is the number of megawatts needed to make wind energy work for the developers from a financial standpoint.

We are moving in the right direction. Another important win for this bill was an amendment that will take care of a significant problem involving gas leaks. This amendment will require companies to repair gas leaks when construction on infrastructure is already taking place in that area. Natural gas is a major contributor to global warming and climate change. This amendment helps to effectively and efficiently take care of these gas leaks.

A majority of the energy bill allows for substantial steps to be taken in the fight against dirty energy.

Utilities are increasingly investing in solar and wind energy. "We are seeing more and more solar picked up by big-name utilities," said green energy analyst Colin Smith in a Wall Street Journal Business News article, 5/10/2016. Despite this, the House could have gone much further in allowing for an expansion of clean energy initiatives.

Discussing the role of offshore wind in Massachusetts' energy future during an April 2016 symposium at UMass, State Senate President Stan Rosenberg said he expects lawmakers to send an omnibus energy bill to Governor Baker's desk by July 31 "which would create the vision for how we're going to encourage and support the creation of wind energy, particularly offshore wind."

It is time for the clean energy champions in the Senate to produce an even friendlier, more environmentally effective bill.

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