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May 20, 2009

Dear President Obama,

In November our ad hoc coalition of environmentalists, technology and project developers, utilities, academics and local governments wrote to make you aware of our groundbreaking “statement of joint principles” regarding development of ocean renewable energy from waves, tides, and ocean currents.

As we noted then, the oceans are a huge potential source of clean energy; estimates indicate they could supply 10% of current U.S. demand. In our letter, we urged your new Administration to swiftly move to clarify a regulatory regime for ocean renewable energy technologies by resolving a long-standing conflict between the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the Department of Interior’s Minerals Management Service (MMS) regarding jurisdiction over hydrokinetic projects on the Outer Continental Shelf.

We found a receptive ear when we met with members of your transition team in December and had high hopes that your Administration would demonstrate strong leadership in this arena. We have not been disappointed. Less than ninety days after your inauguration, FERC and MMS have signed an MOU resolving their conflict, and your Administration appears committed to pushing forward on a number of other recommendations from our “principles” document. We want to extend a hearty “thank you” to you and the members of your team who have worked on this issue, and for doing so much to advance development of renewable energy.

In particular, we want to single out Interior Secretary Ken Salazar and FERC Chairman Jon Wellinghoff for praise; they personally negotiated the agreement that led to the signing of the MOU between their agencies, after a stand-off persisted without resolution for three years under the previous Administration. Secretary Salazar and Chairman Wellinghoff have demonstrated exemplary leadership and are to be commended.

In addition, we are aware that the Council for Environmental Quality, under the leadership of its Chair, Nancy Sutley, has also been positively engaged and extraordinarily helpful in moving matters forward.

As both the MOU and the MMS Final Rule on Renewable Energy on the OCS make clear, there are a number of policy issues that still must be resolved in this arena. We look forward to working with Secretary Salazar, Chairman Wellinghoff, Chair Sutley, NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco and other members of your Administration on subsequent initiatives to advance development of ocean renewable energy in environmentally responsible ways. We will write to them in the next few weeks to discuss proposals regarding these next actions in more detail.

Sincerely,



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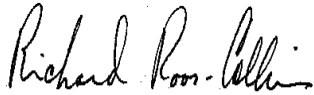
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cc: Secretary Salazar
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