

Gus Gates: All right. For the record, I'm Gus Gates, I'm the Washington Policy Manager with the Surfrider Foundation. We represent recreational ocean enthusiasts up and down the Washington coast and are organized in our 5 grassroots, volunteer-driven chapters in Bellingham, Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia, and the Olympic Peninsula. So I just wanted to continue the appreciation to the Ocean Caucus and the state agencies involved for their leadership in this effort. We've been involved for many years – really since the beginning part even before my own arriving in Washington State. But really, this I think has been a really good process and I appreciate the opportunity to provide public comment here tonight. But I also wanted to thank individually Jennifer and Katrina for their hard work and their persistence in this effort. And it's really been a pleasure to work with you both. Some have come and gone and you guys have just kept an eye on the ball there, and moved this really significantly forward. And I know it's taken a long time, and sometimes you probably wondered if it was ever going to get done, but here we are, and I think there's a really good product here that all Washingtonians should feel proud about. And this is really a culmination of really the best available science, human use information, and a very stakeholder-inclusive process. And I think that that, in and of itself, is really a huge thing. So, it kind of feels like – to me at least – having not been in Washington for all that long – maybe kind of a paradigm shift in how we address natural resource challenges in this state. Really, and agencies and stakeholders all coming and sitting down at the same table. And that's a cool thing. So kudos for all your work there.

I'm going to keep my comments kind of brief in general. We'll get in to more detailed stuff probably in written comments over the coming weeks and we'll send out those. But I just wanted to take advantage of the opportunity here today to highlight a few things, like I said. A couple things that I really like about the plan – you mentioned the spatial recommendation. And just given how busy of a place it is off the Washington coast and that it would be a pretty challenging thing to find a space of 50 square miles for industrial uses of a renewable energy technology that doesn't significantly adversely impact those existing uses and habitats and resources we care so much about. And I think that's a really powerful statement in a lot of ways in that the reality is, maybe further offshore – maybe not. Maybe it's more of a community-driven conversation, and I think that that's maybe, hopefully where conversations eventually go. As someone who has witnessed conversations more down in Oregon over the last 10 years – the conversations changed a lot, and we don't know where this is going to head. But at the end of the day, this plan is a really important baseline. And when you look at the draft environmental impact statement and kind of the alternative of having a plan versus not having a plan, the choice is pretty obvious. It's a no-brainer. I mean, you kind of stop for a second and think like, "why didn't we do this 30 years ago?" And so, I'm in full support of moving forward with the plan. I think it makes a lot of sense. It establishes something that we can work upon in the future. And I think having that door open for periodic review in the future as things change – as we know that they will – is a really important piece. So, I really like that. I really like the inclusion of the standards. I think the language is very clear in those. I really appreciate the attention to detail that's being laid out there. And I think at the end of the day, this puts the state of Washington in a really strong position with our role and federal – any decisions that might be made in federal waters. And that's a really important perspective for us to have. And having this plan provides the state of Washington and its citizens a much stronger place at

that table. So I appreciate that. I think that that was all I really wanted to touch on. I'm sure I could talk for way more time than that, but I want to get home and watch the Seahawks game like everybody else so I'll leave it at that but thank you again for the opportunity to provide comment and like I said we'll get some written comments in here soon.