

First-of-its-kind, 10,000 sq. foot cannery, begins operations in the Port of New Bedford

“Mayor Jon Mitchell, elected officials, and Island Creek Oysters, Inc. (ICO), an aquaculture farm based in Duxbury, Massachusetts, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Tuesday, October 31st to announce the opening of the Island Creek Cannery, a first-of-its-kind cannery on the East Coast.

The 10,000 sq. foot facility will give local shellfish farmers consistent access to the market while providing a shelf-stable, nutritious line of local value-driven seafood products, contributing to a more diverse, sustainable, and secure aquaculture industry.

The facility will also help address oversupply by ensuring adequate processing capacity during market fluctuations, shore up prices for farmers, reduce waste, diversify species and food, and create a range of jobs from processors to marketing experts.

Island Creek Oysters, Inc. was founded in the early 1990s by Skip Bennett, who wanted to grow sustainable, quality shellfish products. After 27 years, the company has evolved into a vertically integrated and diversified business and cutting-edge aquaculture leader consisting of a headquarters, shellfish hatchery and world-class R&D center, shellfish farms, wholesale distribution, innovative consumer-facing e-commerce, retail, and hospitality businesses. They buy from and promote over 100 New England shellfish farms and fishermen.

The company developed a strong relationship with the City and

the Port as it advanced its plans in New Bedford. In a letter to Mayor Mitchell in November 2021, Robert Chandler, Director of Operations at ICO, wrote, “We have chosen the historic Port City of New Bedford in large due to your leadership in spearheading the New Bedford Ocean Cluster. We applaud your robust support for a sustainable, working waterfront with thriving local fisheries and aquaculture, modern-day infrastructure, and a skilled workforce. We share your vision for an innovation-driven coming together of marine science, commercial fishing and processing, and cutting-edge advanced technology to drive employment and wealth creation for New Bedford residents.”

“As America’s seafood capital, New Bedford is the fitting location for the country’s first cannery of craft conservas in the U.S.,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell. “Island Creek is a naturally renowned brand in the premium shellfish market and a leader in sustainable harvesting practices. We look forward to supporting them in this exciting new venture.”

“We are firm believers that New England’s greatest assets are its coastal communities. The new Island Creek Cannery allows us to build the infrastructure we need to reposition canned seafood for US consumers in a way that will not only promote better access to responsible, healthy, domestic protein but also redevelop a major value driver for coastal communities—the American cannery,” explained Island Creek Oysters President, Christopher Sherman. “With 25 years of experience in cultivating a consumer-facing lifestyle brand that educates and inspires consumers about the multi-faceted benefits of oysters and aquaculture, the Island Creek team is thrilled to be the stewards of this transformative initiative.”

“The new facility, Island Creek Oyster’s Inc., is a welcome addition to the Port’s overall seafood processing capacity and it aligns well with the strategic priority the Port Authority has placed on the development of both aquaculture and

shoreside business development," said New Bedford Port Authority Director, Gordon Carr.

All photos by Island Creek Oyster's Inc.:



About Island Creek Oysters:

Skip Bennett, owner and founder of Island Creek Oysters, planted his first oysters in 1995 after three years growing quahogs in the Duxbury Bay. After much trial and error, and some undeniably delicious oysters, Island Creek Oysters has grown into one of the largest and most reputable aquaculture businesses in the US, selling millions of oysters per year around the world. Intense care is given to every step of the farming process, from hatchery to harvesting. Because of Island Creek's commitment to excellence, the National Shellfish Association named Island Creek Oysters the best oyster in America. For more information, or to purchase oysters for home delivery, please visit <http://www.islandcreekoysters.com>."

New Bedford Police Department's first "hybrid vehicles" are now on the road

The New Bedford Police Department would like to announce that two of its frontline cruisers are now Ford hybrids.

Hybrid electric vehicles are powered by an internal combustion engine and one or more electric motors, which use energy stored in batteries. The battery is charged through regenerative braking and by the internal combustion engine. The extra power provided by the electric motor allows for a smaller engine.

The battery can also power auxiliary loads and reduce engine idling when stopped. Together, these features result in better fuel economy without sacrificing performance (U.S. Dept. of Energy).

Hybrid cruisers can get around 23 miles per gallon when operating on city streets, as opposed to the regular models which only get around 17. This not only saves on fuel costs but helps to lessen the carbon footprint left by years of continuous patrolling. As of today, two west-end patrol units, #12 and #14, are hybrids. The goal is to outfit our entire fleet with hybrid vehicles in the near future, and perhaps even electric ones in years to come.

"We are proud to announce that our department has taken a significant step towards a more sustainable and fiscally responsible future. With reduced emissions, improved fuel efficiency, and enhanced versatility, these new cruisers are a step in the right direction. These vehicles will undoubtedly

help to save taxpayer money over the next few years.”-Paul Oliveira.



Photo by New Bedford Police Department.

Massachusetts Governor Healey Sees Merit In Possible Mass Save Overhaul

Gov. Maura Healey thinks changes need to be made to the Mass Save program that conducts home energy assessments and offers rebates to help Bay State residents save money on energy bills.

Climate Chief Melissa Hoffer wrote in a report released Tuesday that the program “continues to support fossil-fuel heating systems” and that “there are inefficiencies in the collaborative decision making, staffing, and leadership structure,” and recommended major reform.

Healey told the News Service on Thursday that “from what I’ve read” Hoffer “is really onto something in terms of reforms that need to be put in place.”

Mass Save is a collaborative of Massachusetts’ natural gas and electric utility providers meant to increase energy efficiency in residents’ homes.

“The Mass Save program currently is administered by electric and gas utilities,” Hoffer wrote in her report. “It has become increasingly clear, particularly in light of the successes of sister-state entities Efficiency Maine and Efficiency Vermont, that, under the current statutory framework, the Mass Save program is failing to take the steps necessary to achieve the transformative levels of building decarbonization required.”

Vermont and Maine, which Hoffer references as examples of success, run their energy efficiency programs with an independent program administrator, acting separately from electric distribution utilities.

Asked Thursday if she believes utility companies should be removed from the helm of Mass Save, Healey said “I think it involves a host of measures, and I think it’s something we’re going to look at.”

The governor said she saw Hoffer’s recommendations as a way to improve Mass Save and save money for consumers.

On its website, Mass Save says Massachusetts is one of the most energy efficient states in the country and that its programs “empower residents, businesses, and communities to make energy efficient upgrades by offering a wide range of

services, rebates, incentives, trainings, and information.”

Hoffer’s report says program administrators “are not directly subject to” the state’s building decarbonization goals, the program operates with a “short term” three-year planning and operations horizon, and Mass Save suffers from “inefficiencies in the collaborative decision making, staffing, and leadership structure.”

“Any reform of Mass Save will need a transition period to ensure that existing markets for energy efficiency services are not disrupted; that said, there is an urgent need to transform Mass Save and that work should occur on a parallel track with more incremental measures to be implemented in the three-year planning cycle,” the report said.

Labor is a part of any major effort and the governor also singled out some of the recommendations around workforce development and engaging young people.

“We know that when it comes to this clean energy transition, and climate tech and climate in particular, there are so many workforce opportunities, so I’m excited about the conversations we can have with our Secretary of Education and others about how to grow that much needed workforce pipeline,” Healey said.

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center estimates the state’s clean energy workforce will need to grow by an additional 29,700 full-time workers to meet the state’s statutorily-mandated greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals by 2030. The offshore wind industry alone is projected to grow by 724 percent in Massachusetts by 2030.

Hoffer suggested a May 2024 deadline for the state to develop “a comprehensive, cross-agency plan to build the clean energy, climate, and resilience workforce that includes measurable targets and goals” as she said current efforts “remain insufficient to prepare the Commonwealth workforce for the

unprecedented energy system changes that are taking place and will continue over the next several decades.”

“When you think about the number of electricians, for example, who we’re going to need to employ in the coming years. It’s an exciting opportunity to work with our community colleges, to work with their vocational programs, to work with the trades, for example, to grow the number of electricians,” Healey said.

The governor said she was excited about the idea of a Youth Climate Corps. The Climate Office suggested creating a corps to provide volunteer opportunities and youth-focused programs to prepare young people “for good-paying jobs in clean energy and climate resilience.”

“I’m excited about what that means for engaging our young people who have made really clear that they need action now on climate,” Healey said.

Grand opening for popular “Ulta Beauty” at Dartmouth Mall almost here!

Ulta Beauty will be occupying over 7,500 square feet of the Dartmouth Mall in the near future! The popular beauty store has set their eyes on an opening date of November 17th.

Construction began in mid July and it is located directly adjacent to Aldi supermarket.



Steven Richard photo.

Ulta Beauty is a popular chain of beauty stores in the United States, they offer a wide range of beauty products, cosmetics, skincare, hair care, and fragrances. There currently is an Ulta kiosk inside the Target in Dartmouth, while the nearest Ulta storefront is located in the Southcoast Marketplace.



We have seen a lot of activity lately in the Dartmouth Mall with several stores closing and new stores popping up. Notably, we have seen Forever 21 and VR Zone announce they

will be opening a store in the mall, while Santander Bank and Davids Bridal have closed.

Ulta Beauty will most definitely be a popular addition to the mall, which hopefully will lead to even more popular stores calling the Dartmouth Mall home.



Massachusetts residents gambled over \$500 million dollars on sports betting in September alone

September kicked off the 2023 NFL season which was a special one in Massachusetts as it is the first year you can legally gamble on sports in the state. According to the Massachusetts gaming commission, Massachusetts residents wagered a whopping

\$512 million dollars on sports betting in the first month of the NFL regular season.



SEPTEMBER 2023 REVENUE REPORT

SPORTS WAGERING	CURRENT & FUTURE WAGERS SETTLED	ACCRUAL WIN BY LICENSEE	REVENUE HOLD %	TAXABLE GAMING REVENUE	TAX COLLECTED
RETAIL LICENSEES (TAXED AT 15%)	\$12,429,636.81	\$814,331.55	6.55%	\$783,017.39	\$108,763.61
ONLINE LICENSEES (TAXED AT 20%)	\$499,748,033.95	\$50,230,855.93	10.05%	\$49,026,912.17	\$9,805,382.89
TOTAL	\$512,177,670.76	\$51,045,187.48	9.97%	\$49,809,929.56	\$9,914,146.50

Photo by Massachusetts Gaming Commission.

\$499.7 million was wagered via online sports betting, with Draftkings being the most popular in the state. \$49 Million was considered “taxable gaming revenue” and \$9.8 Million was collected for taxes.



ONLINE LICENSEE	Current & Future Wagers Settled	Accrual Win by Licensee	Revenue Hold %	Taxable Gaming Revenue	Tax Collected (20% for Online/Mobile)
Barstool Sportsbook	\$12,953,075.81	\$974,737.88	7.53%	\$942,103.41	\$188,420.68
BetMGM	\$33,533,024.96	\$3,698,816.70	11.03%	\$3,614,984.14	\$722,996.83
Betr	\$303,158.53	\$28,691.57	9.46%	\$28,021.67	\$5,604.33
Caesars Sportsbook	\$18,137,418.40	\$1,640,430.39	9.04%	\$1,595,089.39	\$319,017.88
DraftKings	\$290,142,168.48	\$28,228,841.82	9.73%	\$27,528,120.00	\$5,505,624.01
Fanatics	\$8,895,193.78	\$577,200.52	6.49%	\$565,005.26	\$113,001.50
FanDuel	\$121,929,643.30	\$14,213,751.46	11.66%	\$13,919,838.71	\$2,783,967.74
WynnBet	\$13,854,350.69	\$868,385.59	6.27%	\$833,749.59	\$166,749.92
Total	\$499,748,033.95	\$50,230,855.93	10.05%	\$49,026,912.17	\$9,805,382.89

Photo by Massachusetts Gaming Commission.

Between the NBA now tipping off, the MLB World Series, and the NFL in full swing, one would imagine these numbers will rise even higher in October and November.

\$5 million project will create walkable connection between downtown New Bedford, train station

Mayor Jon Mitchell recently announced that New Bedford has been awarded \$5 million dollars for a project that will create a more walkable connection between downtown and the new passenger rail station.

The mayor noted, "Public infrastructure investments like these

lead to more private investment” while thanking Massachusetts Governor Maura Healy and Lt. Governor, Kim Driscoll.

Making a connection between the passenger train station and downtown, New Bedford will be critical to help local restaurants and businesses feel the positive impact of the south coast rail.

Many thanks to @MassGovernor and @MassLtGov for awarding #newbedford \$5 million for a project that will create a more walkable connection between downtown and the new passenger rail station. Public infrastructure investments like these lead to more private investment. pic.twitter.com/gGSqBL2XGc

– Jon Mitchell (@JonMitchellNB) October 25, 2023

Amid influx of migrants on the South Coast, New Bedford has NOT taken in migrant families

In August, Governor Maura Healey declared a state of emergency in Massachusetts due to rapidly rising numbers of migrant families arriving in need of shelter. Hotels and other housing facilities began taking in migrant families in towns and cities across the state.

Recently, hotels in Fairhaven and Dartmouth began housing new migrant families which stirred up some controversy in the south coast. A recent article from “The Herald News”

highlighted the “9 south coast communities sheltering migrants through state of emergency”.

Within the article they explained,

“A spokesperson for the state’s Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities confirmed that Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Fall River, Middleboro, New Bedford, Somerset, Swansea, Taunton and Wareham are all now housing families through the state’s emergency shelter system.”

We reached out to Mayor Mitchells office to clarify if New Bedford has now been tasked to house more migrant families amid Governor Healey’s state of emergency.

Joshua Amaral, Director of the Office of Housing & Community Development gave us this statement,

“As part of the state’s existing family shelter program, for many years the state has funded the operation of a number of scattered site apartments throughout New Bedford. According to the state, approximately 30 families are presently sheltered under this program in the City, consistent with previous years. The state has not acted to expand the level of its existing sheltering capacity for migrant families in New Bedford, as has occurred in other municipalities.”

Fairhaven residents strongly divided on housing of migrants at Seaport Resort &

Marina

Two groups of protesters were formed outside the “Seaport Resort & Marina” in Fairhaven, Massachusetts on Saturday morning. One group in opposition to the housing of migrants, while the other being in favor.

It was quite the scene with signs being held, horns constantly beeping, and both sides loudly speaking their minds. I will give credit to each side as the entire time I was there, it was peaceful and at no point did I ever feel like any form of violence was going to take place.

Although it was absolutely two peaceful protests, I understand tensions can run high and I genuinely wanted to hear a non confrontational argument from both sides. Most people in each camp did not want to do an interview, but eventually I was able to find three individuals willing to speak their minds on camera.

I would like to preface both interviews by saying, it takes extreme courage to put yourself out there and publicly expand on your political beliefs on a polarizing topic. All three individuals have my utmost respect whether I agree with them or not. I believe open and civil dialogue is the only way tackle major issues.

First, I interviewed two woman in favor of housing migrants in Fairhaven.

Next I went across the street and found this gentlemen who was willing to speak with me.

This issue has been slowly working its way closer and closer to the south coast, and now it is finally here. What is your position on the housing of migrants in our community? Do we need to focus on our own citizens that are in need? Or is it

basic human decency to help these migrants in need?

Massachusetts, Rhode Island & Connecticut agree to nation's first "Multi-state offshore wind project of large scale"

Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut recently announced the nations first offshore wind multi-state coordination memorandum of understanding (MOU). Through this MOU, the three states will together seek multi-state offshore wind proposals.

"The climate crisis requires us to act in new and innovative ways. Massachusetts is proud to join with our neighboring states to continue to grow New England's offshore wind industry," said Governor Maura Healey. "By working together, we can amplify the many benefits of offshore wind for all three states, including regional economic development opportunities, healthier communities, lower energy bills, and advantages to environmental justice populations and low-income ratepayers."

In New England, we work best when we work together.

*I'm proud to announce with @GovDanMcKee and @GovNedLamont a first-in-the-nation multi-state agreement to deliver affordable offshore wind to our region and create cleaner, healthier communities across New England.
pic.twitter.com/6QNvp0glQI*

– Maura Healey (@MassGovernor) October 4, 2023

“Offshore wind is an important resource in meeting our Act on Climate and renewable energy goals,” said Rhode Island Governor Dan McKee. “Regional collaboration through this three states MOU will not only help in advancing offshore wind projects of large scale by securing cost-effective energy prices for ratepayers – but it also provides a significant opportunity for long-term economic development that the offshore wind industry will bring to the three states.”

“We can go further when we work together, and I’m excited to be collaborating with our neighbors in Massachusetts and Rhode Island on this MOU, which opens up the potential for us to procure clean energy from offshore wind together at more competitive and affordable rates, for the benefit of the residents and businesses in our respective states,” Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont said.

Connecticut’s deepwater ports, direct water access, and long history of advanced manufacturing make our state a natural home for offshore wind projects serving all of our region.
pic.twitter.com/cFxu7foGlZ

– Governor Ned Lamont (@GovNedLamont) October 5, 2023

The multi-state coordination MOU is an agreement between the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER).

Topgolf Rhode Island “year

round climate controlled complex” is officially here

Golf lovers of southern New England couldn't be happier, Topgolf Rhode Island is officially here! With the grand opening kicking off on Friday, October 6th, we now have a fantastic new place to hangout and have fun year round.

Topgolf is a sports entertainment complex that features an inclusive, high-tech golf game that everyone can enjoy, paired with an outstanding food and beverage menu, climate-controlled hitting bays and music. Every Topgolf has an energetic hum that you can feel right when you walk through the door!



Photo by Topgolf Rhode Island.

This is one of those places that you only went to on vacation because only vacation destinations had it. Now, not only will we have Topgolf in Cranston, Rhode Island, but a location is opening up in Canton, Massachusetts within the next year.

What makes it a great place to hangout is that really anyone

can have fun, think about it like golfs version of bowling on steroids!

Topgolf Rhode Island is located at 120 Sockanosset Cross Rd, Cranston, RI and open 7 days a week.



Photo by Topgolf Rhode Island.