

Chris Buchanan  
Searsport  
LD 2266

Dear honorable members of the committee,

My name is Chris Buchanan, and I am a resident of Searsport. I am submitting testimony against this bill, LD 2266, because it directly targets Sears Island (Wahsumkik) for development of the Transportation Parcel for an Off-Shore Wind Marshalling Port that should be placed in the industrial zone on Mack Point.

This Island is the Crown Jewel of Maine's coast, next to Acadia, which is managed by the federal government, and much harder to get to. There is nothing else like it in size, scope, history, or accessibility (FREE). For generations, Maine families, especially working class families, have used the island for recreation and to harvest good. Previously, it was used by the Penobscot People. Everyone that goes there, to this day, feels a reprieve from the pressures of every day life. It is a haven for children and adults. When you are there, you can literally feel how special it is in your bones. These activities cannot co-occur with a Port Facility.

It is outrageous that the State is attempting to develop a portion of the island, when they have the Mack Point Alternative sitting directly across the bay. I have read the reasons put forward by NRCM for developing the island, including the fact that the bay does not need to be dredged, and that it is a "safer" launch point for workers. These do not pass the straight face test. The Sprague property at Mack Point needs to be repurposed. It is an existing brownfield that will, eventually, be repurposed and expanded. Dredging is inevitable. Additionally, regarding a "safer" launch point... I have looked at the proposed off shore wind site identified by the Federal Government. It is extremely far away. These components will have to travel over the open ocean for miles, no matter what. Part of living with and working along the ocean is respecting the weather and conditions. If there is a north wind, the island will be less safe for launching. It just doesn't make sense.

I think the development of off shore wind in Searsport is a great idea. And I applaud the state for using organized labor. But there is no excuse, or monetary value high enough, for desecrating even a portion of the most special natural feature of this area. People love it. I believe that the State, the DOT, and all of the sell-out big green groups who are ignoring the use of Mack Point will gravely regret trying to push onto the island. I believe it may compromise the viability of the entire project. Please vote no on LD 2266.