

## Testimony of the Maine Labor Climate Council in Favor of LD 2266

Good Morning Senator Brenner and Representative Gramlich and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. My name is Scott Cuddy and I live in Winterport. I am the Director of Policy for the Maine Labor Climate Council and I am here to testify in favor of LD 2266.

Recently, the Governor expressed her administration's preference for Sears Island to be the site of the port that would construct the floating offshore wind towers that we need to help us decarbonize our power generation. Not long ago it was discovered that there is a sand dune in the area that this port would be constructed in if it gets sited on Sears Island.

MLCC recognizes the importance of this rare habitat. We also recognize that the construction of the port to build floating offshore wind towers in Maine is our best bet to decarbonize our power generation, heating and cooling, and transportation. It is entirely possible that Sears Island will be the only practical place to site this port. If that's the case, this dune could be the only thing stopping the construction of this port.

MLCC hopes that we can find a win-win situation wherein more areas on Sears Island receive protection, or other coastal areas get moved into conservation, or some other environmental action can be taken that would help, while simultaneously allowing the single most important climate change project we will ever have in Maine move forward. Additionally, we feel that including language around a Community Benefits Agreement could add yet another win to this arrangement. This would help ensure that Searsport receives the economic boon of the port construction, but is held harmless for the changes that come to the community.

Climate change is already impacting our coastal communities and ecosystems, including sand dunes, as witnessed by the devastating storms that hit Maine last December and in January. We have to build a tremendous amount of clean energy infrastructure if we want to have a reasonable shot at stopping the worst effects that are still to come, and offshore wind is by far the largest and most significant piece of the puzzle for Maine. This means we have no easy choices, and even a decision *not* to build something has real and reverberating impacts.

We believe that we can protect our environment, improve our climate, create an economic engine in the mid-coast, and create good union jobs in the process. It is our hope that you will agree with us and work to accomplish all of these goals by passing LD 2266 in a form that accomplishes all of this.

I'm happy to answer any questions you might have of me, and I hope you'll vote Ought To Pass on the final version of this bill.