

Testimony from Aaron Palleschi, in Support of L.D. 1895, "*An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources*"

Senator Lawrence, Representative Ziegler, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology, my name is Mike Isgro and I'm here today to speak in favor of L.D. 1895.

I am a proud member of Local 7 Ironworkers Union and I live in Portland.

Like most people in my line of work, I am not a comfortable public speaker. Of course, we've all had the helpful advice, picture everyone in their underwear or whatnot. Instead, I've decided to act like I'm reading my 5-year-old son a bedtime story. A story that we read from his bed, in our home in Portland. A home that would have been nothing more than a pipe dream if it weren't for my union.

The ironworkers' union provided me with the wages and benefits to make this dream come true; a dream all working class individuals deserve to see come to fruition. That said, I still traveled south to Boston for 6 years because the wages in Maine are too low to do more than help the working class tread water.

Since the pandemic I have opted to stay closer to home and work in Maine. Even with my union wages in Maine, my family and I barely manage to stay afloat. Offshore wind renewable energy is an excellent opportunity to develop a new industry – for the Maine working class, by the Maine working class.

The wages and benefits provided by project labor agreements and labor peace agreements can help usher in a new era of successful working class prosperity in our beautiful state.

When we build out a new industry with strong labor standards right up front, as this bill does, we see time after time that they raise labor standards and wages for workers all the way across the construction sector -- union and non-union alike.

At a time when the disparity between the average CEO to employee is more than 600 to 1; I feel it is time to invest in the working class of Maine and let us set the standard as we move into the future.

Thank you very much and please vote ought to pass on LD 1895.