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May 18, 2023

Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

RE: Friends of Casco Bay Testimony in Support of LD 1895, An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources

Dear Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

Friends of Casco Bay supports **LD 1895, An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources** and respectfully requests that the Committee vote that the bill Ought To Pass. We must act now to address the causes of climate change. Scientific data informs us that the Gulf of Maine is warming faster than 99% of the world's oceans. As part of the Gulf of Maine, Casco Bay is also undergoing alarming changes that threaten its health. To lessen the harm, Friends of Casco Bay supports clean energy sources such as offshore wind that transition us away from fossil fuels. We balance that support with our mission to improve and protect marine waters. We support LD 1895 because it advances offshore wind to reduce the causes of climate change while striving to protect marine waters and the wildlife that depends upon clean healthy oceans.

For over 30 years, Friends of Casco Bay has worked to improve and protect the health of Casco Bay. The biggest threat to the Bay is from climate change. Our data show that temperatures in Casco Bay have warmed 3° Fahrenheit since 1993. At a rate of 1°F per decade, the warming trend suggests the nearshore environment in Maine's most populated region will continue to see dramatic changes in the coming years. In fact, Casco Bay's three warmest years on record all occurred in the past five years. Warming waters have also been linked to changes in species distribution. We now have blue crabs and black sea bass; lobsters are moving north and out to deeper waters. In the last four years, Casco Bay has also lost 54% of its eelgrass beds, which provide critical habitat and shoreline stabilization. In addition, climate change has made our waters more acidic and inhospitable to shellfish. Suffice it to say, we must act now to develop new sources of clean energy, such as offshore wind.

LD 1895 does this; it sets ambitious goals to help Maine meet clean energy targets while ensuring that such energy is procured in an environmentally responsible manner. It sets standards for wildlife, fisheries, and environmental monitoring and mitigation. Using the best available research and data to inform siting, construction, and operation of offshore wind will help guarantee that it coexists in harmony with Gulf of Maine's unique ecosystem and the people, communities, and wildlife that depend on it. Importantly, LD 1895 requires funding for independent scientific research to study the best way

for Maine to embrace wind power while protecting the environment. The bill also places key experts on the advisory board, allowing us to better understand the impact of offshore wind projects so that we can continue to move forward in a manner that takes into account significant environmental and marine resources.

For the foregoing reasons, we respectfully request you vote that LD 1895 Ought to Pass. Thank you for considering our comments.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ivy L. Frignoca', written in a cursive style.

Ivy L. Frignoca, Casco Baykeeper
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