



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

Committee on Appropriations & Financial Affairs
% Office of Fiscal and Program Review
5 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

February 28, 2025

Re: Public Hearing, LD 210, Proposed Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Biennial Budget

Dear Senators Lawrence & Rotundo, Representatives Sachs & Gattine, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony in support of initiatives within the Mills Administration's proposed Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Biennial Budget, on behalf of the Maine Renewable Energy Association (MREA). MREA is a not-for-profit association of renewable energy producers, suppliers of goods and services to those producers, and other supporters of the industry. Our member companies include wind, solar, hydropower, biomass, and tidal energy generators and developers of such projects, as well as companies that provide services to those producers, such as environmental engineers, electricians, general contractors, and legal services.

MREA supports the budget initiative that would establish a cabinet-level Department of Energy Resources. As the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee knows full well, energy is part and parcel to the well-being and advancement of all Maine residents, businesses, and institutions. Through this budget-neutral initiative, energy would stand on equal footing as the current and future administrations implement their vision for Maine, as is the case in the majority of states. As a part of the Cabinet, the proposed Department of Energy Resources would work in true partnership with other Departments, addressing cross-sectional issues such as land use, attraction and retention of Maine businesses, and climate resiliency.

MREA also supports the \$1 million annual request to support the Clean Energy Partnership. These funds will sustain the Governor's Energy Office's (GEO) Clean Energy Partnership program that has helped shepherd over 15,000 clean energy jobs in Maine and is in able pursuit of the Governor's goal of 30,000 by 2030. As a leading voice for the clean energy

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industry in Maine, MREA is uniquely situated to opine that such state leadership is an essential component of advancing this burgeoning industry.

Finally, though not exclusively, MREA supports the request to fund the Offshore Wind Research Consortium at \$250,000 annually for two years, increasing the annual funding for the Consortium to \$1.25 million a year. The Consortium, coordinated by GEO alongside the Departments of Marine Resources and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, plays a crucial role in ensuring that Maine's offshore wind present and future advances in cohesion with Maine's commercial and recreational fisheries, marine wildlife, and other natural resources.

Thank you for your consideration of MREA's testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eliza Donoghue".

Eliza Donoghue, Esq.
Executive Director