

Elaine Isakson
ROCKLAND
LD 226

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF LD226 and LD735
10, 2025

March

Greetings Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and Members of the ENR Committee,

My name is Elaine Isakson, I live in Rockland, ME and I am testifying in SUPPORT of LD 226 "An Act to Protect the Cultural Resources and Historical Heritage of Sears Island in Searsport by Extending Conservation Easement Protections".

I have long valued and been renewed by spending time in Maine's natural environment, and have come to believe I need to take action to protect it. It is my responsibility and that of all of us to care for the environment that we depend on and enjoy so much.

This bill present a hard choice, because caring for the environment involves protecting lands and waters, as well as switching to renewable forms of energy. I support wind energy. In the end, standing up for Sears Island boils down to a belief is that we have the right goal, but the wrong place, that we must find the location that will have the least negative impact on the environment. Yes, build a port, yes, develop offshore wind, but choose a less impactful site.. Surely we can find such a place on the long coast of Maine..

This is not just a case of "Not in My Backyard". Sears Island is a unique place, and there are few places as special along our coast. Once you spend time there, you will understand. If it were to be drastically altered by a wind port and the necessary development to go with it, the beauty and essence of Sears Island would be lost forever.

Equally important is that these ecosystems are sensitive. They don't survive, much less thrive, when they are carved up. The forests and wetlands of Sears Island help to keep our Penobscot Bay waters cooler, which in turn helps our fisheries. In addition, they are critical for countering climate change, by virtue of the amount of carbon sequestration they provide.. They help our state reach our extremely important and urgent climate goals. Nature is offering Mainers a huge gift in the ecosystems of Sears Island, and we need to do our part.

A further reason for my support, is that this unique point of land is of great historical and cultural value to the Penobscot people, and therefore to all of us, down through time. It was necessary for their sustenance and way of life. In that, it is a place to be revered and respected. Setting it aside is very appropriate.

Last but not least, this is not a smart use of state funds. It is not a wise investment in this location, because of the environmental protections that have to be considered and standards that must be met.

Thank you for your time in hearing my testimony and considering these factors, and for your important efforts on behalf of our state and its residents.

-Elaine Isakson