



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Representative Holly Eaton in opposition to
LD 2174: An Act to Replace the Maine Waterway Development and Conservation Act with the Maine Renewable Energy and Associated Transmission Development and Conservation Act
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Representative Holly Eaton, and I proudly represent House District 15, which includes Deer Isle, Stonington, Brooklin, Tremont, Southwest Harbor, Frenchboro, Swan's Island, Isle au Haut, and Vinalhaven.

I am submitting testimony in opposition to LD 2174 due to its impact on coastal and island communities like those I represent.

The towns in my district are working waterfront communities. Our local economies rely on commercial fishing, marine trades, tourism, small-scale agriculture, and responsible stewardship of limited coastal land. We do not have expansive areas available for development. The land and shorefront that do exist are closely tied to livelihoods, environmental health, and long-standing community character.

LD 2174 would limit the ability of municipalities to adopt or enforce local land use standards that are more protective than state requirements for wind energy developments and high-impact transmission infrastructure. For coastal communities, this is a significant shift.

While offshore wind facilities themselves may be federally permitted, the onshore infrastructure that supports them — including transmission lines, substations, and related facilities — directly affects the communities I represent. Decisions about where and how this infrastructure is sited have real implications for working waterfronts, fishing access, scenic resources, and already limited land availability.

District 15: Brooklin, Deer Isle, Eagle Island Township, Frenchboro, Southwest Harbor, Stonington, Swan's Island, Tremont, Isle au Haut, Vinalhaven

In small coastal and island towns, local review is not about obstruction. It is how communities balance energy policy with the protection of marine industries, fragile ecosystems, and existing economic drivers.

I support responsible energy development, but I do not support limiting municipal authority in a way that reduces coastal communities' ability to shape decisions that affect their land and livelihoods.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 2174.

Thank you for your consideration.

Representative Holly Eaton
House District 15