



Maine Conservation Voters

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Testimony of Maine Conservation Voters
Supporting LD 1818

“An Act Regarding Port Facilities Relating to Offshore Wind Power Projects”

Before the Labor and Housing Committee

May 9, 2023

Good afternoon Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and esteemed members of the Committee on Labor and Housing. My name is Beth Ahearn and I'm the Director of Government Affairs for Maine Conservation Voters. Maine Conservation is an organization dedicated to making Maine's environment, democracy, and climate action political priorities.

Maine must develop more renewable energy to meet our ambitious climate and clean energy goals, and offshore wind must be part of the solution. Maine's climate action plan, "Maine Won't Wait," sets a goal of 100% clean energy by 2050. Governor Mills has recently vowed to achieve that goal by 2040. Maine Won't Wait identifies offshore wind as one of the ways to get there and the Offshore Wind Roadmap, authored by the Governor's Energy Office and released in February of this year, details how. Maine is also on target to reach the statutory goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

Much is at stake. We need offshore wind power, and we need offshore wind power that's developed responsibly. That means we need to ensure that projects, including new port facilities, protect the environment, provide real benefits to neighboring communities, and have critical labor standards that protect working Maine people and ensure that they are receiving a fair wage, good benefits, and a seat at the table.

If we act now, Maine can set high environmental, equity and labor standards for this emerging clean energy industry. Other states are competing to develop offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine. The Gulf of Maine has some of the strongest, most consistent winds in the world. That makes it a good place for offshore wind. The Gulf of Maine is also home

to critical Maine fishing industries, and it is our responsibility to find a way that offshore wind and fishing can successfully co-exist. Our climate future depends upon it.

Climate change is impacting Maine; our winters are warmer, our summers are hotter and drier, and the Gulf of Maine is warming faster than 90% of the waters in the world. You may already have experienced ticks this spring- they no longer die off as they did when our winters were colder. Maine is more dependent upon oil for home heating than any state in the country and this ongoing dependence is driving up energy prices for families and businesses.

Responsibly developed offshore wind will deliver clean energy, benefit communities, and launch an innovative new industry. Ports are a critical component of offshore wind development. Please vote unanimously 'Ought to Pass' on LD 1818. Help Maine to speed up the transition to clean energy, reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, and create a sustainable new industry powered by Maine people.