

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing:

My name is Corliss Davis. I am a resident of Belfast and I am testifying in support of LD1818, An Act Regarding Port Facilities Relating to Offshore Wind Power Projects. I am proud to be a constituent of Senator Curry, the sponsor of this bill, and to support his efforts to bring an offshore wind port facility to Waldo County.

I am also a member of the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Belfast. Among the principles of our denomination are “The inherent worth and dignity of every person” and “Justice, equity and compassion in human relations” – both of which are directly upheld by LD1818. The bill’s strong and specific focus on recruiting a diverse workforce including minorities, women, veterans, LGBTQ+ persons, tribal members and people from impoverished rural communities exemplifies values our denomination has championed for decades.

I attended a UU meeting on the State’s housing crisis last week in Brunswick. A man there pointed out that affordable housing is often available in small towns (like Searsport), but the good jobs needed to allow young families to purchase a home are usually lacking. The construction of a port facility in Waldo County with the strong labor protections built into LD1818 should lead to fair wages, meaningful apprenticeship opportunities, equitable job access for workers underrepresented in construction and manufacturing, and also offer workers a free and fair chance to join a union.

Lastly, I am encouraged to see that LD1818 requires planning for zero-emission technologies and for enhancement and restoration of any intertidal or upland areas disturbed by offshore wind projects. LD1818 is one of three bills that, if passed, will work together to not only establish our state as the leader in the development of clean, economical offshore wind energy but will do it in a just and equitable way we can all be proud of. Climate change is affecting our fisheries, our farms and gardens, our coastline, and our health and it’s time to take action in every way we can.

I urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD1818. Thank you.

Submitted by Corliss C. Davis, 5 Park St., Belfast ME 04915