

Maine Climate Action **NOW!**

To: Maine Legislature Committee on Labor and Housing

From: Ania Wright, Maine Climate Action Now & Sierra Club Maine

Date: May 9, 2023

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1818: *An Act Regarding Port Facilities Relating to Offshore Wind Power Projects*

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Honorable members of the Committee on Labor and Housing, my name is Ania Wright. I am a resident of Portland and a member of the Board of Maine Climate Action Now (MCAN), a statewide coalition of grassroots organizations who support transformative action in response to the climate crisis. I am also a unionized staff member at Sierra Club Maine, which is a coalition member of MCAN. At MCAN, we hold social, racial, and economic justice as critical to the transition to zero carbon emissions by 2030 and demand the equitable implementation of clean renewable energy, ecological land-use practices, and bold community-led action for a more resilient Maine. To that end, we urge you to support L.D. 1818.

This bill is an important step towards a responsible offshore wind industry in Maine. Port infrastructure is needed to realize direct and near-term economic and environmental benefits for the people of Maine. The bill develops the necessary infrastructure for the State to help meet its renewable energy and climate goals with offshore wind energy resources located in the Gulf of Maine, while doing it in a way that protects our environment and ensures equity in the hiring process.

In terms of equity, L.D.1818 will ensure we listen to, and protect, frontline communities such as our lobstering and commercial fishing industry - but also those coastal communities that support these industries with related businesses. It will require developers to hire Maine residents (who would be trained via apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs), including members of low-income, rural, historically disenfranchised, and tribal communities, as well as workers directly impacted by the growth of offshore wind energy. These jobs will be high quality, family-sustaining union jobs that will also serve to grow our local state economy.

L.D. 1818 will lower the impact on nearby communities by requiring operators of port facilities to pursue federal funding for zero-emission equipment to ensure clean air and quieter port operations. It will also encourage the infrastructure to support responsible development of offshore wind energy resources in the Gulf of Maine to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions in the state, stabilize energy supply prices, reduce Maine's reliance on fossil fuels, and realize ecological benefits for the people of Maine. Finally, the bill directs all relevant state

agencies to pursue newly available federal funding to enhance climate resilience and biodiversity of any nearshore, intertidal or upland areas disturbed by port development.

In order to ensure an offshore wind port in Maine encourages good jobs and protects our communities, we urge the committee to vote 'ought to pass' on L.D. 1818. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ania Wright
Legislative & Political Specialist, Sierra Club Maine
On Behalf of Maine Climate Action Now