



Traci Gere
7 Towne Street
Kennebunkport, ME 04046
Phone (207) 710-3557
Traci.Gere@legislature.maine.gov

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1400
TTY MAINE RELAY 711

**Testimony of Representative Traci Gere Introducing LD 1895,
An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources
May 18, 2023**

Good afternoon Senator Lawrence and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology. I am Representative Traci Gere, and I represent House District 134, which encompasses Kennebunkport and coastal Biddeford and Kennebunk. I am before you today as a cosponsor to testify in support of LD 1895, which proposes law and process to govern Maine's purchase of energy from offshore wind facilities and our participation in their development.

It is rare to have the chance to pass laws that create long-term opportunity for Maine people and economic benefit for Maine communities, while at the same time moving us to renewable energy sources and helping the climate. This bill is one of those chances. As the federal Bureau of Energy Management moves forward with awarding leases to offshore developers, we have a moment in time when we can influence the outcomes of that process by requiring an agreement that will govern how Maine will purchase the electricity generated by the resulting offshore wind facilities.

The development of offshore wind generation through BOEM's process is moving forward, and passing LD 1895 will help to assure that we maximize its benefits to Maine by requiring the responsible entity to invest in our coastal fishing communities with a stated annual target rate of investment. This investment is essential to help coastal communities adapt to environmental change, help our fisheries and working waterfronts adopt new practices and technologies, and enable local businesses to have priority in providing services to the selected offshore wind provider.

Our fishing communities need this assistance to finance the solutions to the challenges that they face, and they deserve the right to have a clear and powerful role in decisions that affect them and an on-going ability to make sure that agreements are being implemented and followed as contracted.

These kinds of agreements have been and are being used in other parts of the U.S. and in other countries to assure that fishing communities benefit from the shift to renewable energy sources. Technologies that enable safe fishing around offshore wind platforms are working in other places. They can work here. Working waterfronts with services and businesses that support offshore wind operations are emerging to take advantage of the economic opportunities presented by offshore wind. They can be built here. And people in coastal communities all over



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the world are accessing new careers, growing their economies, and taking ownership of their futures. Maine people must have this chance to do the same.

We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bring the economic benefits of offshore wind development to Maine people in an enforceable and sustainable way. The opportunity to influence the terms of offshore wind development and access the associated financial resources is now, and will not come again soon. I urge the committee to support the passage of LD 1895.

I am available to answer any questions. I thank the Committee for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Traci Gere".

Traci Gere
State Representative