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Testimony of Rep. Aaron Dana opposing

LD 1895, An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources Before the Joint Standing Committee Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and distinguished members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee, my name is Aaron Dana, Tribal Representative for the Passamaquoddy Nation, and I stand here today to voice the Passamaquoddy Tribe's significant concerns with the development of off shore wind energy and the legislation **LD 1895, An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources**. Our community at Indian Township formally opposes these developments while Pleasant Point plans to meet very soon to take a public position. Regardless, the entire Tribe has grave concerns, particularly if Eastport is used as a place to launch wind turbines from

While I understand the need for renewable energy sources, I believe that this particular type of energy development would have a profound and negative impact on our cultural heritage and way of life. I also want to emphasize that our tribal communities were never consulted with by the state until the past few days. We were never included in the Governor's offshore wind group even though they were plotting to use our lands and resources as a potential launching ground for the state clean energy goals.

There should have been consultation under LD 585 but there was not. This plays a huge impact on tribal and state relations. Our tribal communities have long-standing relationships with the ocean, which is an essential part of our cultural and spiritual identity. We are Peskotomuhkati, which means people who spear Pollock, a fish that only lives in the saltwater.

As this illustrates, our ancestors have fished, hunted, and gathered along the coast for thousands of years, and these activities continue to be an essential part of our livelihoods and cultural practices. These plans will impact our traditional fishing grounds and access to our sources of sustenance and will impose on our unceded tribal salt water rights.

It is undeniable that the development of off shore wind energy would threaten these traditions and our way of life.

Tribal Representative (Passamaquoddy Tribe)

If Eastport is used, then a 35 MPH highway running through Sipayik will be used for traffic to the hub. Our families walk that road to visit family, on their way to work, and on their way to fish and collect in the salt water all around our community. The risk of vehicular collisions, air pollution and noise pollution on this densely populated community are significant from a health perspective.

The construction of turbines and transmission lines in the ocean would disrupt critical habitats and migration patterns of marine species, on which our communities rely for subsistence and cultural practices. The noise and vibration from these turbines would also have a negative impact on marine life, which is an essential part of our cultural and spiritual identity.

Moreover, the placement of these turbines on the ocean floor would also potentially disturb ancestral burial sites and other culturally significant areas, which would be a severe violation of our sovereignty and cultural rights.

Finally, I am concerned about the potential for negative impacts on our sacred sites and cultural resources on land. Many of our sacred sites are located near the coast, and the construction of transmission lines and other infrastructure associated with off shore wind energy would likely disturb these sites and negatively impact our ability to practice our cultural and spiritual traditions.

In conclusion, I urge you to consider the impacts of off shore wind energy development on our tribal communities and to demand a more equitable process. We must balance the need for renewable energy with the protection of our cultural heritage and way of life. I ask that you work with our tribal communities to identify alternative locations and technologies that do not threaten our cultural practices and rights.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tribal Representative (Passamaquoddy Tribe)