

LD 1895 *An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources*

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and the esteemed members of the committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

The burning of fossil fuels, and reliance on environmentally destructive mega dams, to produce electricity is a significant driver of the global climate emergency, with adverse effects on frontline communities. A rapid transition to clean renewable energy is imperative if we are to avoid the catastrophic effects of runaway climate change, effects which will devastate Maine's economy, and our unique ecology. Offshore wind is one of our greatest opportunities to protect Maine's prosperity.

My name is Scott Vlaun. I am the executive director of the Center for an Ecology-Based Economy (CEBE) in Norway, Maine. I'm here today in support of LD1895, *An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources*.

CEBE has been hard at work for the last ten years to raise awareness of the climate crisis and help our rural area adapt to the accelerating impacts of climate change, impacts which are already adversely affecting our environment and placing an increasing burden on our municipalities and local economy. In a region so dependent on tourism associated with our once pristine lakes and forests, as well as a reliable winter snowpack and ice on our lakes, the collapse of once reliable weather patterns poses great risk. We are in a global climate emergency, yes, but it is a local emergency.

We are fortunate to live in Maine where our forward-thinking government has developed a robust climate action plan and has begun to provide assistance to rural municipalities like those that my organization works with as a Service Provider for Maine's Community Resilience Partnership. While a step in the right direction, this funding is but a drop in the bucket in the face of the adaptation measures that will be required to adapt to accelerating climate change, and also do our part to help mitigate the crisis.

To that end, our area has seen an explosion in the development of solar power, which my organization embraces, but we are also seeing a lot of blowback on this as commercial solar developers have run roughshod over local communities, often siting installations without community input and careful consideration of important ecological factors.

Terrestrial wind deployment here is also controversial as it often involves building roads into pristine areas and has minimal community support. The fact is that rural western Maine, while doing its part, cannot become a sacrifice zone in Maine's transition to renewable energy, especially considering that much of Maine's electrical consumption is in our cities and more affluent coastal areas.

The time for rapid deployment of offshore wind is now. This source of clean, renewable and reliable energy dwarfs any other resource we have available, and will put Maine on the road to

energy independence while keeping billions of dollars at work in the state's economy LD 1895 moves us dramatically in the right direction, building on the work of broad coalitions across fisheries, labor, renewable energy advocates and climate activists This important bill with its unprecedented emphasis on equity and inclusion is a giant step for Maine's future energy security in the waning days of the fossil fuel era and will represent a significant contribution in the fight against global climate change It will also set a high standard for offshore wind development elsewhere Please vote ought to pass on LD1895

Scott Vlaun
Executive Director,
The Center for an Ecology-Based Economy