



**Testimony of Garrett Mason
in Opposition to LD 1895
"An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources"**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy Utilities and Technology My name is Garrett Mason and I'm here on behalf of my client the Associated Builders and Contractors of Maine On behalf of our 182 members who employ over 2,500 people we are testifying today in opposition to LD 1895

As Maine continues to pursue a carbon neutral energy future by 2040 there are many energy sources being considered as potential replacements for carbon based energy sources It's a lofty goal, but one that our industry is ready to help reach Part of that carbon neutral future for Maine is off shore wind As there are for every energy production method there is debate around the environmental and cost elements of off shore wind However one element that doesn't need debate is the enormous benefit to Maine's construction industry and the workforce that will be needed to build and maintain these projects As both the State and Federal governments ready themselves to grant leases we need all hands on deck for this incredible undertaking

However, as we have seen multiple times in this session, this seems to be another in a series of bills that, either knowingly or unknowingly, is aimed at discriminating against the 90% of Maine's construction industry that has chosen to not join a union As one of Maine's largest construction industry organizations and a chief advocate of the Merit Shop philosophy we have great concerns about the provisions in this bill that require and promote Project Labor Agreements and Labor Peace Agreements The bottom line is that many of our member companies simply will not bid on a project that mandates these agreements The labor shortage will be greater than it already is and these projects will be awarded to out of state companies

Proponents of project labor agreements will tell you that anyone is free to bid for a project While that may be true a PLA makes it incredibly difficult and nearly impossible for those who have chosen not to join a union For the companies and their employees that are not signatories to a PLA its simply easier to bid for and win work that doesn't include these provisions PLAs carve out work for a small set of contractors that operate under a different model Because of the enormity of the project in front of us including this provision as a poison pill significantly hampers the ability of the State to complete these projects on time and within budget

Proponents will also tell you that PLAs increase safety and train workforce for the future Well, there is more than one way to cook an egg ABC applauds any program that is training next generation workforce and we would expect others to have the same appreciation for alternate programs ABC is in the third year of our registered apprenticeship program with the state Our

members have apprenticeship programs of their own that we are proud to promote. We also have on-the-job training programs and other state sanctioned training programs that prepare the workforce of the future. Some will attempt to imply that these programs that have worked and been applauded for years should now be viewed as inferior simply because they aren't theirs. We think that is incredulous and discriminatory. Not to us - but to our members and their employees.

PLAs also are documented time and time again to increase costs on state and federal projects anywhere from 12-20%. There are examples all around the country of projects that have had enormous cost overruns because of the seemingly innocuous inclusion of PLAs into a bid requirement. There is no question that the cost to build out the infrastructure for large scale off shore wind will be expensive. ABC questions the wisdom of including a provision that would cost the taxpayers more. As we all know, money is not infinite. The inclusion of a PLA will lead to fewer projects being completed at higher costs.

As Maine heads towards a clean energy future we should be using all the tools at our disposal. This bill will tie the hands of the State and eliminate the participation of many upstanding Maine companies. We hope this committee will vote "ought not to pass" on this bill.

Thank you and I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have or provide answers I do not for work session.