

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

Good afternoon, Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee. My name is Grant Provost, I am the Business Agent for Ironworkers Local 7 in Maine and a Maine State AFL-CIO Executive Board Member. I serve on a host of boards for the State of Maine including the Maine State Workforce Board, the Central and Western Maine Workforce Board, the Maine Construction Wage Board, and the Maine Offshore Wind Roadmap Advisory Board. I am also on the Climate Jobs National Resource Center Board, the Maine State Building and Construction Trades Executive Board, The Gulf of Maine Sustainability Alliance, Mainers for Offshore Wind and New England for Offshore Wind. I am a Labor advocate through and through, pushing for our members place in the reconstruction of our state's energy infrastructure. I rise in favor of LD 1895 An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources.

My family is a multi-generational Maine Family. Both my parents were Union Members, my wife and I are as well. There are many benefits offshore wind will bring to Maine both environmentally and economically. One benefit I know for sure is that of the financial win for Maine constituents, for when we expand the opportunity for local people to not only join a union but enjoy plentiful employment, we change the economic future of that constituent's community. The life my family leads and the opportunities my kids have, lie in my union membership. I can only begin to describe what this has meant to me and how I have devoted my life to making sure others have that same opportunity.

In my testimony I would like to talk about my life and how union membership has helped my journey to who I am today. When I graduated high school, I joined Ironworkers local 7. I was a man without plan, I enjoyed the outdoors and working with my hands. I was enrolled in Local 7's Apprenticeship Program where I learned the skills I would need to excel in my field. I worked for multiple employers while having all my benefits stay with me. On top of that I worked in states as far away as Hawaii with all my benefits such as pension, 401k and health insurance always following me. No matter who the signatory contractor was. As I aged, starting a family and settling down became a priority. First, we bought an apartment building in Portland, Maine and then a house in South Berwick. I was able to do all this because I worked for years in Massachusetts. The beginning of my own family in Maine, a state I am from, would not have been possible if I had not left for better pay. In Massachusetts I worked 5 years straight on PLA projects, private and public (Whittier Bridge Replacements, Salem Harbor Powerhouse, and the Encore Casino). Every year I earned close to or upwards of six figures, I put a robust amount into my 401 k and received 2 pension credits per year due to all the overtime I worked. This is what we can bring to Maine for Maine workers. The Agreements (PLA's) I worked under had language that included not only local hire but diversity, equity, and inclusion standards to the point of which the Construction Manager guaranteed certain percentages from disadvantaged populations by creating a position to hold every sub-contractor

accountable to the standards in the agreement PLA's are good for workers, good for the community and good for this State

What this bill also does is protect one of Maine's most iconic industries, the commercial fishing industry, namely lobstermen and women. The LMA 1 one exclusion has support from fisheries who have fished the waters of the coast of Maine for generations. Before telephones, the combustion engine, the diesel locomotive and the there were lobstermen and women here fishing the Gulf of Maine. I fully support the LMA 1 language in this bill as it keeps Maine's identity itself intact. You cannot be a multi-generational Mainer without having a family member or a couple dozen in the fishing community here. It is in our heritage. My family has been Maine Guides, wood cutters, logging camp cooks, mechanics, teachers, ironworkers and fisherman in this state for generations. Vast amounts of my close friends have been or are lobstering. Members of this committee have fished commercially and may again someday. We can have responsibly sited projects that decarbonize Maine without putting the lively hoods of the men and women who work on the water in jeopardy.

Maine has displayed great leadership in its dedication to addressing climate change. It is time for the state to show it is equally committed to reducing inequality, closing the race and gender wealth gap, and building a clean energy economy that allows residents to thrive with good jobs and healthy communities. PLA's and LPA's for Offshore Wind and Port Infrastructure provide a blueprint for Maine to help abate climate change, support and protect high-quality jobs, confront inequality, and ensure that frontline communities have access to high-quality clean energy jobs. Commercial scale offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine is an opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, create many good jobs, and build stronger, healthier communities throughout the state. Implementing these recommendations will put Maine on a path to achieving its climate goals while meeting important job and equity objectives. Mainers need to see how executing the state's climate plans will enhance residents' lives by creating high-quality union jobs, lowering energy bills, and cultivating a healthier environment.

Offshore Wind is an Opportunity for Maine to do something historic and we can do it together. Today at this hearing you have heard testimony from our amazing coalition. A group representing Environmental Organizations, Labor Unions, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Parties, Youth Climate Action Groups and the Fishing Industry. You heard from Mainers, you heard from Maine. All our concerns align to one core message, Offshore Wind is good for Maine and should be done responsibly, we stand ready to assist that mission. We hold ourselves accountable to work the long hours, to make the hard decisions, and to make sure voices that have not been heard have their day. We do not check boxes, we engage and are proud to work collectively with anyone, it only strengthens our movement. Along the way we will not settle for watered down actions or results, there are too many depending on us to get this right. Our coalition has done some incredible work moving this legislation before the committee today, now you must decide what the best course for Maine. I trust this committee to vote ought to pass and usher in the next chapter in Maine resilience.