

To: Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
From: Jackson Chadwick, Maine Youth for Climate Justice
Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2025



RE: Testimony in opposition to L.D. 226: “An Act to Protect the Cultural Resources and Historical Heritage of Sears Island in Searsport by Extending Conservation Easement Protections,” and L.D. 735: “An Act to Protect Sand Dunes on Sears Island and to Establish Criteria for Legislation Regarding Land Development”

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Jackson Chadwick, and I am the Advocacy Director for Maine Youth for Climate Justice (MYCJ), a coalition of more than 500 youth and young adults. We advocate for a just transition from fossil fuels towards a more sustainable future where young Mainers can comfortably live, work, and prosper. Our members are high school and college students, environmental activists, rural leaders, and young adults entering and contributing to the Maine workforce.

I am speaking on behalf of MYCJ today to urge you to vote against L.D. 226 and L.D. 735. These bills would severely stifle our state's ability to reach its renewable energy goals.

Conserving forest lands for carbon sequestration is important in combating climate change. In this case, however, an offshore wind array could have an even greater impact. For instance, by constructing a 13 gigawatt (GW) array, 26 million tons of CO₂ could be avoided¹ each year. In comparison, just 8,300 tons² could be sequestered by 100 acres of forest on Sears Island annually.

At a time of heightened volatility and uncertainty at the federal level, achieving energy independence and self-reliance in Maine has never been more crucial. Offshore wind generates electricity locally, boosts our economy, and supports Maine communities. Hundreds of wind-related jobs³ already exist in Maine, with the promise of many more as offshore wind expands.

¹ Calculated via Avoided Emissions and Generation Tool (AVERT), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:
<https://www.epa.gov/avert/avert-web-edition>

² Calculated via Securing Northeast Forest Carbon Program:
<https://northeastforestcarbon.org/forest-carbon-estimators-and-calculators/>

³ 2022 Maine Offshore Wind Talent Analysis:
<https://www.maine.gov/energy/sites/maine.gov.energy/files/inline-files/2022%20ME%20OSW%20Talent%20Analysis.pdf>

The offshore wind industry also offers increasing opportunities for young Mainers to pursue careers in the trades such as engineering, manufacturing, welding, and more.

As one of few individuals here today solely representing youth voices, I ask you to consider our futures and the economic, environmental, and long-term benefits of offshore wind.

Maine Youth for Climate Justice strongly implores you to vote against L.D. 226 and L.D. 735.

Thank you for listening to our testimony.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jackson Chadwick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jackson Chadwick
Maine Youth for Climate Justice
Advocacy & Organizing Director