

LD 2266 An Act Regarding Offshore Wind Terminals Located in Coastal Sand Dune Systems

March 18, 2024

Good Morning Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Grant Provost, I am the Business Agent for Ironworkers Local 7, the Recording Secretary of the Maine State Building and Construction Trades Council and the Vice President of the Maine State AFL-CIO. I rise in favor of LD 2266 An Act Regarding Offshore Wind Terminals Located in Coastal Sand Dune Systems.

I come here today on behalf of labor as the future of so many is tied up in the decision before you. At one point I thought of just rebranding my testimony from the 130th Legislative Session's Ports Bill, LD 1818, as the vast majority of talking points ring true for this current bill. Consider yourselves lucky, as reference it's attached to this testimony, please do enjoy the extra reading on the subject.

So many points ring true for Organized Labor as they do for the State of Maine. Maine's workers are not the only ones who stand to make substantial gains with the building of an Offshore Wind Port, many local contractors and businesses do as well. All aspects of Wind in the Gulf of Maine are moving forward, if we will see the benefit of which is to be determined by you. In the Gulf of Maine the Wind Energy Area has been selected by BOEM, we are proud to see that Lobster Management Area 1 has been excluded from commercial development. In fact, the vast majority of the Wind Energy Area is in the South and West in the Gulf of

Maine, which is a win for Maine Fisheries. Ironworkers Local 7 is very proud to have stayed the course and fought for this exemption along side our sisters and brothers who make their living on the water.

What will not be a win is a squandered opportunity to build a port here in Maine. As seen by generations, when the good paying jobs go out of state so do our kids as well as their families to be. We need to make decisions that promote the effort put in by those at the University of Maine who have designed a state of the art floating hull which exists nowhere else in the world. The same University who will train countless graduate and doctorate students, engineers, professors and entrepreneurs, to send that talent to other New England States to the South. States who are more than willing to make the type of decisions and investments that will spearhead a new economic driver for their constituents. Maine Maritime Academy in conjunction with Northern Maine Community College won a grant to gear up and be able to give the specific training local workers will need to participate in this work. I know this because I worked hard on a grant to be able to send our local members to this training, with the full intension of their continued employment in Maine. Labor fights for Maine workers being able to come home from long hard day each evening and tell their families they're building Maines future and fighting climate change, so that their kids can enjoy Maine the way they have. Without this bill those Maine workers will still participate in the Offshore Wind Industry, they'll just have to tell their kids about it over the phone instead of at the table.

To make this economic possibility for Maine a reality, tough choices will have to be made, and with each decision comes an opportunity. To build a port on undeveloped land was always going to come with a need for environmental mitigation. This bill

gives us the chance to start strong by showing skeptics that Maine can turn a tough choice into an opportunity, while teaching others how to do the right thing. I support those in the environmental community here today and agree that the loss of this dune system must be compensated for and I look forward to supporting potential solutions identified as part of the legislative process.

I appreciate your time today and look forward to any questions you may have,

Grant Provost

Ironworkers Local 7

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207-314-3530

An Act Regarding Port Facilities Relating to Offshore Wind Power Projects

Good Afternoon Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and esteemed members of the Labor and Housing Committee. My name is Grant Provost, I am the Business Agent for Ironworkers Local 7 and a Maine State AFL-CIO Executive Board Member. I come before you today in favor of LD 1818 An Act Regarding Port Facilities Relating to Offshore Wind Power Projects.

The importance of this piece of legislation cannot be understated today. Maine has a revolutionary opportunity, an opportunity that won't be feasible without a dedicated port. An Offshore Wind Port focused on Floating Technology, the first in the Nation. We have a chance to lead our great State into the next phase of humanity, where we leave the Industrial Revolution behind and move into the Electrical Revolution. A port dedicated to Offshore Wind will spearhead a new industry Mainers can participate in for years to come. It will provide anchor jobs in the Building and Construction Trades for decades and give not only our college grads a chance to stay local, but thousands of apprentices will be able to use this as a launching point to their careers. Our State's Registered Apprenticeship Programs will be turning out thousands of apprentices into family sustaining union careers, reconstructing our energy infrastructure into one of the future.

This Bill will be an effective vehicle for what we can deliver to our local constituents, high quality union jobs. Or continue to spin the perpetual wheel that has held so many back here in Maine. Low pay and the lack of quality employment sends our neighbors, friends and family members out of State for work. This is a major drain on talent, would be resources to local businesses, and coincidentally is not driving the average age of Mainers lower. I have over a decade spent working in States other than my own, it's how I became a homeowner.

The simple facts are, to maximize the federal funding for port facilities States are using Project Labor Agreements and Labor Peace Agreements. None of these are new ideas, PLA's and LPA's do not prevent contractors or developers from bidding, winning or working on a project. These agreements do create a level playing field and maximize benefits for those who not only work on the port but will work in the port after construction.

Up and down the east coast Offshore Wind Projects are being permitted, are under construction and have been completed using Project Labor Agreements. Developers not only understand PLA's and LPA's but prefer the security and guarantees they give them. Now with the Inflation Reduction Act, developers enjoy the consistent and bountiful funding a Project Labor Agreement and a Labor Peace Agreement can provide. The good news is anyone can enter into these agreements' union or none, it is a business decision.

What this Bill will do is build a port of the future for the future. Capitalizing on existing federal dollars to stay consistent with what the existing market trend is while striving for a carbon free if not carbon neutral port. A state-of-the-art facility for an emerging industry where, through our combined goals of achieving commerce that benefits local community members. Maine creates an outstanding opportunity we can hang our hats on and hand off to the next generation with pride. For we were innovators who wouldn't settle for anything other than the best for our natural resources, our environment, friends, neighbors, and families. We fought like hell, and we got it done!!! I urge the committee to vote ought to pass, making this endeavor a remarkable step in the journey to not only a carbon free Maine but a national example of how just transition can be done.

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