

Jodi Hayashida, Maine People's Alliance
Testimony in support of LD 2266

Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and honorable members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee: My name is Jodi Hayashida. On behalf of the 32,000 members of Maine People's Alliance, I am here today to offer testimony in support of LD 2266, An Act Regarding Offshore Wind Terminals Located in Coastal Sand Dune Systems.

Our constituents from across Maine are on the frontlines of climate change. For this reason, Maine People's Alliance has supported the state's climate change plans and initiatives, and has previously testified to support strong labor standards, as well as goals around conservation and environmental justice. I am here today because we believe offshore wind is a key component in building a sustainable future for our communities and families here in Maine. An offshore wind terminal is a necessary part of our plan to address the climate crisis, and Sears Island represents the best site for that port.

We are here today alongside our partners from other community and environmental organizations, organized labor, and members of the faith community to ask you to support bringing clean energy and good paying, union jobs to our state. We believe that the construction of an offshore wind port is a non-negotiable part of our clean energy future here in Maine - and that the time to act is now.

For this reason, I am here today, on behalf of our membership, to urge you to support LD 2266. We've worked too hard to make offshore wind a reality here in Maine to see this project fall apart.

Maine People's Alliance stands alongside voices from labor and environmental organizations today to call for a thoughtful, one-time permit to construct an offshore wind terminal in a coastal sand dune system, so long as all other permitting and licensing criteria are met. I want to acknowledge that this is a difficult, yet important ask - because coastal sand dune systems are important ecosystems.

For this reason, we respectfully urge the committee to thoroughly consider ways to compensate for the loss of this protected ecosystem, by placing other land in conservation, and by establishing a restoration fund, which could support the resilience of other, similar systems along the Maine coast, as well as research and educational programs. We believe that these, or similar conservation measures to mitigate the impact of siting the marine terminal in a coastal sand dune system, are important.

We also recognize that the cost of inaction is too great, and we risk far more than the loss of one sand dune system if we fail to invest in our clean energy economy.

I respectfully urge you to support LD 2266.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.