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JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

DAN BURGESS
DIRECTOR OF GOVERNOR'S
ENERGY OFFICE

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

An Act To Establish a Moratorium on Offshore Wind Power Projects in Maine's Territorial Waters

L.D. 1619

GOVERNOR'S ENERGY OFFICE
May 4, 2021

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology (EUT): My name is Dan Burgess and I am the Director of the Governor's Energy Office (GEO).

The GEO testifies in support of L.D. 1619.

This proposed legislation would establish a 10-year pause on development of new offshore wind projects in Maine's territorial waters. This would be accomplished by establishing a moratorium that, until 2031, prohibits any State agency or municipality or other subdivision of the State from licensing, permitting, or otherwise authorizing or approving the siting, construction or operation of an offshore wind project in State waters, which is three miles from the coast. This pause does not apply to cables, transmission lines and portside infrastructure that may support offshore wind energy generation. It also does not apply to tidal energy, wave energy, or an offshore wind energy demonstration project proposed for location in the Maine Offshore Wind Energy Research Center for which the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has approved the terms of a long-term power purchase agreement.

Maine is well positioned to create a strong offshore wind industry that can create good paying jobs while playing a vital role in meeting the State's renewable energy and greenhouse gas reduction requirements. Maine's greenhouse gas reduction goals are targeted to support U.S. and international efforts to slow global climate change, which is already contributing to a warming and acidifying ocean, sea level rise, marine species impacts, and increased storm events.

With the offshore wind industry poised to present significant economic, supply chain, and workforce opportunities for Maine, Governor Mills announced the State's plan to create the country's first floating offshore wind research array in the Gulf of Maine. As envisioned, the research array would be located some 20 to 40 miles offshore into the Gulf of Maine and is expected to contain a dozen or fewer floating wind turbines over approximately 16 square miles of ocean or less. By comparison, commercial offshore wind lease areas elsewhere along the East Coast are frequently greater than 10 times this size.

In recognition of concerns raised by Maine's fishing industry during stakeholder conversations on offshore wind, Governor Mills announced this legislation to establish a 10-year moratorium on new offshore wind projects located in State waters. The GEO believes that this approach strikes a balance

between preserving State waters for valuable fishing and recreation, while reaffirming Maine's priority of locating offshore wind projects in Federal waters of the Gulf of Maine, where the State has proposed the nation's first research array for floating offshore wind technology. In relation to lobster specifically, up to 75 percent of Maine's commercial lobster harvesting occurs in State waters. This effort prioritizes areas for offshore wind that are well offshore and in federal waters. It is our belief that fishing and offshore wind energy can co-exist for the benefit of all Maine people.

Upon the release of the Maine Climate Council's Climate Action Plan, *Maine Won't Wait*, the Governor announced a clean energy jobs goal of doubling Maine's clean energy jobs to 30,000 by 2030. The growth and development of the State's offshore wind industry will aid in meeting this clean energy jobs goal, while growing the clean energy economy and providing supply chain development opportunities. This significant economic development and workforce opportunity will not be hindered by pausing state water offshore wind development to focus on federal waters. The offshore wind industry is expected to generate \$1 trillion in global investments by 2040. With offshore wind now projected to be a \$70 billion industry in the U.S. over the next decade alone, a growing number of projects in development along the Eastern coast of the U.S., and a clear federal directive supporting offshore wind, the time for Maine to responsibly develop this renewable energy industry as an economic driver to create sustaining, good-paying jobs in engineering, construction, manufacturing, and more is now.

Maine has a world-class offshore wind resource off our coast and the Gulf of Maine represents one of our State's largest untapped clean energy resources. With technology proven around the world, offshore wind can lead to economic growth and provide clean energy that combats climate change and reduces our dependence on fossil fuels. Building on more than ten years of Maine-led offshore wind research and development, the State has made significant strides through the Maine Offshore Wind Initiative during the last year to explore opportunities for thoughtful development of offshore wind energy in the Gulf of Maine and determine how to best position Maine to benefit from this burgeoning industry.

Maine's recently released Renewable Energy Goals Market Assessment indicates that while Maine is on track to meet its near-term Renewable Portfolio Standards requirement through 2026, new energy resources, such as offshore wind, will need to be brought online to continue to meet our clean energy goals.¹ Additionally, Maine's 10-year Economic Development Strategy identifies offshore wind as a critical opportunity to grow the State's economy and encourages the State to set forth a balanced agenda that maximizes economic benefits for Maine people while creating a culture of innovation that creates a foundation for future leadership in this growing industry.

In summary, the potential of Maine's offshore wind resources to provide clean energy generation for the State and region, create significant economic benefits in a global market, support supply-chain development, and create workforce opportunities for the State is immense. The GEO strongly believes that efforts must continue to be pursued in the avenues identified above. The State should continue to engage in efforts to responsibly develop this industry, to the benefit of Maine people.

¹ State of Maine Renewable Energy Goals Market Assessment. February 2021. Accessed at: <https://www.maine.gov/energy/studies-reports-working-groups/current-studies-working-groups/renewable-energy-market-assessment>

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Burgess". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" being more prominent than the last name "Burgess".

Dan Burgess, Director
Governor's Energy Office