

Jason Shedlock  
Laborers' International Union

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Good afternoon Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. I am Jason J. Shedlock and I am a Regional Organizer for the Laborers' International Union of North America. I am also a Trustee and Executive Board Member of both the Maine AFL-CIO and the Southern Maine Labor Council and a resident of South Portland. I also serve on the Maine Apprenticeship Council as well as the State Workforce Board. I appear before you in firm opposition to LD 101, "An Act to Prohibit Offshore Wind Energy Development."

As we ensure a sustainable future for Maine's environment, so too should we ensure a sustainable future for our workforce. We do not do this by taking the intellectually lazy way out by simply stating, "No." "No" is not a strategy. "No" is not going to position the state of Maine to address the needs of our future generations to meet our energy demands, nor is it going to address climate change. "No" isn't going to ensure our economy benefits from the offshore development that is and will continue to occur in waters adjacent to the Gulf of Maine and down the eastern seaboard. "No" isn't going to cut through the emotional hyperbole and gather stakeholders to learn how family-supporting careers for Mainers, traditional Maritime industry and the undeniable need for clean energy can very well co-exist in the vast 36,000 square mile Gulf of Maine.

Functionally, this bill would not prohibit offshore wind development. What it would do is export thousands of Maine jobs and undercut Maine families' way of life for decades upon decades to come. Union members and businesses in other eastern states from Massachusetts to Virginia are already finding high-quality, high-paying jobs in connection with over 22 gigawatts of commitments to offshore wind in shallower waters, with New York and New Jersey benefitting from 38,000 direct and indirect jobs in development and construction. These are jobs with good wages, health coverage and retirement benefits. Offshore wind development in the vast Gulf of Maine promises similar opportunities for working families. By voting for this bill, members of this committee would essentially be saying "No." "No" to their constituents and their access to this middle class way of life.

The Laborers' union stands ready to meet Maine's energy needs of today and tomorrow while employing today's workforce and that of the future. LD 101 is a short sighted, knee-jerk approach that does nothing to address anyone's needs: not our workers, not our environment, not our maritime industry, not or our energy demands. I urge the Committee to reject this proposal, as it lacks the seriousness Mainers desperately need and should expect from their deliberative bodies. I urge you to vote ought not to pass. I'm happy to answer any questions you might have.

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