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May 3, 2021  
Testimony  
In Support of

**LD 101 “An Act To Prohibit Offshore Wind Energy Development”**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, Distinguished Members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee:

My name is Will Tuell. I represent the coastal fishing communities of Cutler, East Machias, Eastport, Lubec, Machias, Machiasport, Roque Bluffs, Whiting, and Trescott Township, and I am here today to speak unequivocally in one hundred percent support of LD 101, and Representative Faulkingham’s efforts to ban offshore wind as long as Maine fishermen are making a living on our waters.

I do so, because I have proudly lived my entire forty-three years in a small fishing community Down East, and have had the honor of representing that community and many others up and down the Washington County coast on Marine Resources for the past six years, and know many, many fishermen who just do not believe offshore wind is right for our state.

Fishermen who have never set foot in the State House, never paid much attention to politics, and never really paid much attention to anything other than the traps they fish, are now charged up to support this bill and end once and for all the debate over whether the industry they love will be pushed aside by development project after development project.

Fishermen have worked our coastal waters, not just in close to the shore, but further out past the three mile line, for generations. As lobster migration patterns change, many fishermen are chasing their catch into deeper waters, and cannot afford to lose an inch of bottom.

Every fisherman here today testifying for this bill has seen their share of tough times, rough waters, horrible catches, uncertain market conditions, increasing regulations, and soaring costs just to keep their boat on the water, and a sternman or two employed.

Each and every one worked their way up, and never asked for much along the way.

Now, these men and women, our friends and neighbors, are in dire need, we have a chance to help them, to pass LD 101 and stand staunchly on the side of the fishermen who are keeping our small coastal communities afloat with every dollar they bring in.

And it is not just fishermen. It is people who live and work around the water, people who depend upon this billion plus dollar industry for their livelihood, and their families who have lived here for generations, raised kids, coached their sports teams, given money to their schools, and helped many pay their way through college or trade school.

There are many more behind me who will do a much better job than I explaining why this bill is so important. But just like the people of Central and Western Maine who have resoundingly rejected the CMP energy corridor, these fishermen and their families are fighting for a voice, for a say, and for their livelihood. I join them as I do my friends to the west – lifelong Mainers who believe that the core natural resources based economy of our state must remain strong if we are to prosper – in stating clearly and decisively that we do not need or want this.

In short, you could sum my support for this bill up with one short, simple phrase, “Fishermen were here first!” We must remember and respect that as we deliberate the future of this legislation, and take clear, decisive action just as we have on so many other fishing related issues in recent years.

Our fishing industry needs us, and so I ask you to join Representative Faulkingham, myself, and many others, in supporting the legislation before you today. I pray we can move it to the floor without delay, and garner a unanimous Ought to Pass in both chambers there as well. The thousands of fishermen up and down the coast expect nothing less.

Thank you, and I am happy to answer any questions.