



May 4, 2021

The Hon. Mark Lawrence, Co-chair
The Hon. Seth Berry, Co-chair
Joint Select Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
State House
Augusta, Maine 04330

Re: Testimony in Opposition to L.D. 101, “*An Act To Prohibit Offshore Wind Energy Development*”

Dear Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and members of the EUT Committee:

On behalf of New England Aqua Ventus, I am writing to provide testimony in opposition to L.D. 101, “An Act To Prohibit Offshore Wind Energy Development,” sponsored by Representative Faulkingham.

New England Aqua Ventus, LLC (NEAV) is a joint venture between Diamond Offshore Wind, a subsidiary of Diamond Generating Corporation, and RWE Renewables, one of the largest companies in offshore wind globally. Combined, the two partners are responsible for nearly a quarter of the world’s offshore wind capacity. Partnering with the University of Maine, NEAV is managing all aspects of permitting, construction and assembly, deployment and ongoing operations for the floating offshore wind technology demonstration project near Monhegan Island. Diamond and RWE, with years of collective offshore energy experience and success, will invest more than \$100 million to build the project and help demonstrate the technology at full scale.

NEAV wants to work with the State of Maine in a fashion that helps Maine foster offshore wind development that enables co-existence of offshore wind alongside heritage industries like lobster fishing. NEAV plans to commercialize the University of Maine’s world-class floating foundation technology, custom-designed for creating local jobs, beginning with the demonstration project near Monhegan. NEAV is ready, willing and able to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in Maine. In 2021 alone, NEAV plans to spend more than \$10 million on development of offshore wind projects in Maine, and has already spent more than \$6 million.

Passage of L.D. 101 would send the message to developers like NEAV that Maine is closed for business and that it does not welcome investment in projects, ports, harbors and jobs related to offshore wind. It would halt development of the State’s planned Research Array and NEAV’s related spending in Maine.

Leasing areas for offshore wind in the vast majority of the Gulf of Maine is up to the Federal Government, under the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), and thus, L.D. 101

would not stop all offshore wind in the Gulf. Leases would simply be more than 3 miles from shore and electric cables could connect to the grid in Massachusetts and/or New Hampshire. But what L.D. 101 would stop are economic development, hundreds, if not thousands, of new jobs, and a burgeoning new industry from developing in Maine. Maine's loss would be a gain for Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

L.D. 101 would cede Maine's leadership of development of the Gulf of Maine to the BOEM, likely urged forward by Massachusetts and New Hampshire filling the leadership void left by Maine deliberately stepping aside. Passage of L.D. 101 would diminish Maine's influence over how offshore wind develops in the Gulf of Maine since Maine would no longer have the research resulting from the Research Array to provide the BOEM with data-driven arguments for adopting the State's best practices for co-existence with fisheries. It does not seem to make sense for Maine to relinquish stewardship of its key heritage industries to the Federal Government.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter.

Sincerely,

Chris Wissemann
New England Aqua Ventus