



**Testimony before the
Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee
Sean Mahoney
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May 4, 2021**

Re: LD 101 – An Act to Prohibit Offshore Wind Energy Development

Good morning Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee. My name is Sean Mahoney, Executive Vice President for Conservation Law Foundation, testifying in opposition to LD 101, An Act to Prohibit Offshore Wind Energy Development. CLF uses the law, science, and economics to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the climate crisis here in Maine and across New England.

As Maine’s climate action plan (adopted pursuant to 38 M.R.S.A. § 577) makes clear, meeting the climate crisis here in Maine will require moving away from oil and methane gas not only as a source for electricity but also as the sources for both heating and cooling our buildings and for transporting people and goods. Doing so will require a transformation of our current electric system, in terms of how we generate that electricity as well as how it is transmitted and stored.

LD 101 is entirely inconsistent with the Climate Action Plan and should be rejected. It would render useless the substantial investment already made by the State of Maine, our flagship University of Maine and scores of Maine businesses who recognize the economic opportunity presented by the potential of offshore wind energy development. While there are legitimate issues concerning the impact of such development on the habitat and natural resources of the Gulf of Maine, those concerns can and will be addressed. LD 1619 which is before you today is an example of one way to address the concerns of Maine’s lobstermen by establishing a 10-year moratorium on wind power projects in Maine’s territorial waters, where almost 70% of Maine lobstermen currently fish.

Offshore wind power may provide significant economic and environmental benefits to the State by generating renewable energy needed to meet the State's climate action plan based on the economic and environmental goals and objectives developed by the Maine climate council. LD 101’s prohibition on any offshore wind energy development is akin to the proverbial “cutting off the nose to spite the face.” Conservation Law Foundation urges the Committee to avoid that fate and vote ought not to pass on LD 101. Thank you.