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Testimony of Representative Lydia Blume in Support of LD 336, “An Act To Encourage Research To Support the Maine Offshore Wind Industry”
May 11, 2021

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, I am Representative Lydia Blume and I represent the coastal part of York. I offer this testimony in support of LD 336, “An Act To Encourage Research To Support the Maine Offshore Wind Industry.”

I am member of the Maine Climate Council, the joint standing committees of Marine Resources and Environment and Natural Resources, and the chair of the Coastal and Climate Action Caucus. Floating Offshore Wind (OSW) is a subject that touches all of these areas and the enthusiasm for its responsible development is felt in all quarters. The support of this bill is important so we can see how OSW can meet our Climate Action Plan goals and make enough progress on generating beneficial electrification to possibly slow down the warming that is occurring in our oceans and affecting our fisheries and water quality. This is the next step in researching what the effects of a full-scale commercial operation will be on the Gulf of Maine’s fisheries, wildlife, coastal infrastructure, energy transmission, jobs and Maine’s overall economy. Maine can be the leader of its own offshore wind development in federal waters and will be in a better position to control where any windmills will be sited in the future. The research array that this bill supports will help make those decisions with real, usable data.

The floating offshore wind technology belongs to Maine, the proposed process to commercial level operations is stepped and research driven to make sure it is compatible with other Gulf of Maine activities. Climate change is happening all around us and affecting us already. It’s time for bold action to bring us away from fossil fuels and reduce our carbon emissions by sustainably using our available natural resources, including our strong wind resources off of our coast. We can and must work together to understand how all beneficial activities in the Gulf of Maine can co-exist and cooperate, ultimately helping all of us have a better environmental and economic future.

I urge you to support this bill so we can continue to be the thoughtful stewards of our many resources in Maine.