

Testimony of
Ben Gilman for
The Maine State Chamber of Commerce

**In support of L.D. 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 & Technology, my name is Ben Gilman, I am from Gorham and I represent the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, a statewide business organization made up of both large and small businesses, here to provide you with our testimony in support of **L.D. 336, An Act To Encourage Research To Support the Maine Offshore Wind Industry.**

LD 336 is the next step in Maine's Offshore Wind Plan; that plan was formed in 2009 and has slowly but persistently and logically proceeded to the research array. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce is on the record in supporting Maine's Offshore Wind industry and the economic benefits that it will bring to our state. The State of Maine has come a long way in terms of developing offshore wind – the ocean energy task force lead to the ocean energy act, which lead to the legislation for an RFP for demonstration projects; which lead to the 2010 bond for work at Searsport and UMaine; which lead to the amendment to the 2013 Omnibus Energy Act; which lead to the term sheet and contract for the Monhegan project; which lead to the requirement for submission of a business case for a 100+ MW project to PUC by the end of this year; which lead to the research array. The research array protects the Gulf (and Maine) from a gold rush of federal leasing in the Gulf by implicitly committing the feds to wait for its results – that allows Maine to ensure the research shows how to integrate OSW with the natural resources of the Gulf and the industries dependent on those resources.

The research array gives Maine a head start on directing economic development associated with OSW and developing its own OSW industry in the Gulf to Maine by:

- Ensuring that only turbines assembled and serviced by Maine facilities will be deployed for the foreseeable future.

- Ensuring that the cabling and onshore infrastructure for early development in the Gulf is located in Maine.
- Ensuring that Maine's portside facilities will be up and running with a proven track record BEFORE any other such facilities are developed adjacent to the Gulf.
- Ensuring that Maine has a trained workforce ready to work immediately on future development.
- And creating spin-off opportunities for Maine boatbuilders to supply the various support craft needed.

If we fail to act as a state, Maine is likely to be bypassed as Massachusetts (Salem and other ports) and New Hampshire (Portsmouth), who are trying to set the agenda to benefit their states and ports. We urge the committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 336.