



# MAINE

## Lobstermen's Association, Inc.

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**Maine Lobstermen's Association Testimony  
In Opposition to  
LD 336 An Act to Encourage Research to Support the Maine Offshore Wind Industry**

May 11, 2021

Senator Lawrence, Rep Berry and members of the Energy Utilities and Technology Committee. My name is Patrice McCarron. I am executive Director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA). I am also a University of Maine graduate and member of the Maine Climate Council. I am testifying on behalf of MLA's board and members in opposition to LD 336 An Act to Encourage Research to Support the Maine Offshore Wind Industry.

The MLA is Maine's oldest and largest fishing industry organization. Maine lobster is integral to Maine's economy representing 80% of the value of Maine's commercial fisheries. In 2020, despite the instability of traditional markets due to COVID, Maine lobstermen landed nearly 100 million pounds of lobster, generating more than \$400 million in ex-vessel value. The lobster industry is estimated to generate \$2 billion in economic activity. Its success is critical to maintaining the jobs base in our coastal communities and the success of Maine's coastal economy.

As you know from our testimony last week on LD's 101 and 1619, the MLA supports Maine's efforts to transition to a clean energy economy, but we do not share the vision that offshore wind (OSW) will play a prominent role in that portfolio.

The MLA continues to advocate that the state take a step back to complete its comprehensive planning effort -- known as Maine's Offshore Wind Roadmap -- for which the state has received \$2 million in federal funding. The state must take a holistic look at the costs and benefits of this energy source for the people of Maine, and then decide how, and if, offshore wind becomes a part of Maine's renewable energy portfolio.

This requires planning and research, both of which the MLA supports.

The MLA's primary concern with LD 336 is who will pay for the research if the commercial research array is developed? We ask why the state of Maine has not included funding for research portion of the OSW research array in the state budget? The integrity of the data

collected through this research project hinges in large part on who is paying to address the many unanswered questions about the impacts of OSW industrialization on Maine' fishing industry, marine life, habitat, birds, and ocean circulation and socio-economics.

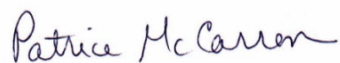
The MLA does not support funding this research indirectly by the wind developer through a power purchase agreement. Wind developers will obviously play an important role in funding the build out of OSW if the project moves forward, but the state must recognize that there is an inherent conflict of interest in having wind developers fund these basic research questions. The MLA also does not support passing the cost of this research to ratepayers.

If OSW is so important to the state of Maine that it intends to site a commercial research development and apply for a commercial wind lease before it begins its Roadmap to Offshore Wind planning process, then Maine must dedicate its own funds to invest in the research it deems essential to protect our heritage industries and the environment. The fishing industry and the citizens of Maine must trust that OSW research will be fair and objective, and address the questions that are important to Maine.

The MLA urges you to vote ought not to pass on LD 336. If the Committee is considering moving LD 336 forward, we strongly urge you to ensure that the state fund this research and work with objective, neutral research partners such as the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA)<sup>1</sup> and the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA)<sup>2</sup>, two organizations dedicated to creating a fair OSW research and development process for all stakeholders.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Patrice McCarron  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> <https://rodafisheries.org/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rosascience.org/>