Testimony to the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee

LD 336: "An Act to Encourage Research to Protect the Gulf of Maine and to Continue Creation of a Maine Floating Offshore Wind Industry"
Tuesday May 10, 2021

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, I am Dr. Anthony Viselli, PE here to speak in support of LD 336.

I am happy to provide my perspective as a former UMaine student who has stayed in Maine to help create a potential new floating offshore wind industry for the State of Maine. I am currently the chief engineer at the UMaine Advanced Structures and Composites Center leading the development of UMaine's floating wind concrete foundation technology effort since its inception 13-years ago.

I have lived in Maine my entire life and been fortunate enough to work on this exciting project. I am from a small rural Washington County town called Cooper with a population of a few hundred people in the summer time and there are few job opportunities in the area. I grew up working for my father's small construction business and then decided to attend UMaine in Orono studying civil engineering. Upon graduation I considered many options for my career including several out of state offers but was able to find a position working at UMaine developing new technologies for a variety of applications including low cost floating offshore wind technologies.

Since this time, I now lead a team of 18 engineers, the largest offshore wind research team in the country and we are working actively to design the first floating wind turbine in the US off Monhegan. LD 336 will help to encourage further development in this area for the state by promoting the creation of a research array farm. The effort is critical to the responsible development of the industry to allow for proper study and planning prior to full commercial deployments.

I feel my experience illustrates how the offshore wind industry is already creating jobs and helping the state's young people looking for careers and opportunities to stay in Maine. Many of my colleagues working at UMaine share a similar story and they have co-signed this testimony.

For the reasons noted above, we urge this Committee to support LD 336. Thank you, and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

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