



COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
Office of the President

May 9, 2021

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and honorable members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee:

College of the Atlantic would like to share our support for LD 1659, An Act to Create the Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator.

We have a long commitment to sustainability and addressing climate change. COA became the first college to go carbon-neutral in 2007, divested our endowment from fossil fuel related companies in 2013, and have a goal to eliminate fossil-fuel use on campus by 2030.

Our commitment extends to the education we provide our students as well. In 2016, we launched the Community Energy Center, which builds on existing sustainability and renewable energy efforts at College of the Atlantic and on Mount Desert Island to research, develop, and implement innovative projects that enable people and business owners to reap the financial and social benefits of transitioning away from fossil fuels. Our students have worked with community members to determine the feasibility of community solar arrays and electric vehicle charging infrastructure paired with photovoltaics, and have performed numerous free solar analyses for local small businesses and farms as part of our flagship *Solar for Businesses and Farms* (SBF) program.

The Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator will support our clean energy efforts on campus and in the community by providing access to funding for low-income households, small businesses, and others in need. It will help to fund a variety of climate solutions and create beneficial jobs throughout the state. This provides an opportunity for our graduates for years to come, and helps create a more habitable planet for all of us.

Please vote in support of LD 1659.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darron Collins".

Darron Collins
President, College of the Atlantic