

Testimony of Maine Labor Climate Council Executive Director, Francis Eanes, in Support of LD 1895, *An Act Regarding the Procurement of Energy from Offshore Wind Resources*
May 18, 2023

Good afternoon Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and members of the Energy, Utility, and Technology committee. My name is Francis Eanes and I'm the Executive Director of the Maine Labor Climate Council. The MLCC is a group of 20 unions dedicated to fighting climate change and income inequality at the same time.

We see these twin challenges as an opportunity to address them both with the same actions. The building of the offshore wind industry in Maine, done right, can put the power of a good, family sustaining job into the hands of thousands of Mainers. If this industry is done wrong it will continue to hand profits to the wealthy while those doing the work barely get by.

In Maine, wage growth has been anemic for years.¹ The promise of "good jobs" in the solar industry has only been proven out for electricians. Laborers, solar installers, and other trades have been left out of the boom. Temp workers make up much of the workforce, traveling from job to job around the country and adding little to the local economy.² This is simply because truly good jobs do not happen by accident. We as a state have to make smart decisions about how industries are born, and they are born so rarely. We have a special opportunity and LD 185 is a roadmap for how to make this an industry that will feed clean power to Mainers, but also feed Maine's economy.

LD 1895 is born out of the excellent work that brought us Maine's Offshore Wind Roadmap. We've done the work with stakeholders, now let's bring that vision to fruition. Let's take care of climate change vulnerable populations, low-income ratepayers, lobstermen and other commercial fishermen, while we improve Mainer's chances of getting a job with dignity and improve our carbon footprint. This bill is a win-win-win. Just keep adding wins.

The union jobs that powered Maine for so long in the paper industry are mostly gone. If we let a new industry start in Maine without ensuring that those are actually good jobs we'll have no one but ourselves to blame.

LD 1895 will ensure that we can leave this place better than we found it for generations to come. I hope that you will support LD 1895.

¹ Data from annual median wages from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage of the Bureau of Labor Statistics for Maine.

² <https://www.vice.com/en/article/z34eyx/shifting-america-to-solar-power-is-a-grueling-low-paid-job>