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***Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing***

***RE: LD 1818 - An Act Regarding Port Facilities Relating to Offshore Wind Power Projects***

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing, my name is Kaitlyn Nuzzo and I am the Government Relations Director for The Nature Conservancy in Maine. **I appreciate this opportunity to submit written comments in support of LD 1818 - An Act Regarding Port Facilities Relating to Offshore Wind Power Projects.**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners.

TNC has been working to conserve, protect, and restore coastal and marine habitats and species for over four decades. Our work in the ocean has been focused on conserving habitats and marine species, improving and sharing science that enables solution-oriented decision-making, and mitigating climate impacts to biodiversity in the marine environment. We are committed to using a science-based and pragmatic approach to work collaboratively with offshore wind developers, federal and state agencies, and natural resource users to find expedient solutions to climate change that are beneficial to people and nature.

We recognize that port development is key to advancing offshore wind in our state and region. LD 1818 sets comprehensive standards for the development of port facilities in our state, taking into consideration job quality, workforce development, environmental impacts, permitting, coastal conservation and climate resilience. Additionally, LD 1818 directs the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to consult with the Departments of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Marine Resources, Transportation and the Maine Port Authority to explore opportunities to seek federal funding to support this work. We know there is enormous opportunity to leverage federal dollars for critical Maine projects.

TNC supports the deployment of well-sited offshore wind as part of a diverse portfolio of renewable energy resources. Our organization is focused on ensuring the offshore wind industry in Maine - and the required port development - considers potential impacts and benefits to the people, communities, workers, and coastal and ocean habitats. We appreciate the approach in LD 1818 to explore and require clean port equipment and technology, which would ensure clean air and quieter port operations. We also strongly support the efforts to pursue federal funding to support coastal conservation and climate resilience in relation to port development.

TNC urges the committee to support LD 1818. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and I am available to answer questions at any time.