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Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

Barry J. Hobbins
PUBLIC ADVOCATE

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Chairman Lawrence, Chairman Berry and Members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee,

My name is Barry Hobbins and I am the Public Advocate with the Office of the Public Advocate and I am here today to testify in support of LD 1619 “An Act To Establish a Moratorium on Offshore Wind Power Projects in Maine's Territorial Waters.”

The Office of the Public Advocate would like to thank the Governor and Senator Lawrence for hearing the concerns of the lobstering community by submitting this bill which would establish a ten-year moratorium on offshore wind development in State waters.

The OPA believes that the greatest potential for offshore wind development is in Federal waters and this bill allows Maine to still benefit from those projects. The Aqua Ventus project is a perfect example of this. The development of the project by the University of Maine in cooperation with RWE Renewables and Diamond Offshore Wind (a subsidiary of the Mitsubishi Corporation) is the first floating offshore wind research array in the country and has garnered bipartisan support.

The Governor said it best in a press release from April 28th, “Maine is uniquely prepared to grow a strong offshore wind industry, create good-paying trades and technology jobs around the state, and reduce Maine’s crippling dependence on harmful fossil fuels. We will focus these efforts in Federal waters farther off our coast, as we responsibly pursue a small research array that can help us establish the best way

for Maine to embrace the vast economic and environmental benefits of offshore wind. Fundamentally, I do not believe offshore wind and Maine's fishing industry are mutually exclusive. I believe they not only can coexist, but, together, can help us build a stronger economy with more good-paying jobs and a brighter, more sustainable future for Maine people."

In February, I submitted an Op-ed to the Portland Press Herald ([link](#)) in support of the Governor's offshore wind initiatives in which I stated, "...this is the right course to protect Maine consumers from higher costs in the long term, safeguard our coastal communities from rising sea levels and mitigate the rapid warming of the Gulf of Maine." Offshore wind development is a key component in achieving Governor Mills' ambitious climate action goals and an outright ban on development would set Maine back for years to come. This bill strikes a balance of protecting Maine's traditional industries while responsibly developing future growth.

LD 1619 would allow Maine to see economic and environmental benefits from offshore wind in Federal waters while protecting State waters for our robust maritime industries.

Thank you for your time, attention and consideration of this testimony. The Office of the Public Advocate looks forward to working with the Committee on LD 1619, and will be present at the work session to assist the Committee in its consideration of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,



Barry J. Hobbins
Public Advocate