

Testimony of
Ben Gilman for
The Maine State Chamber of Commerce
In opposition to

L.D. 616, An Act To Amend the Expedited Permitting Area for Wind Energy Development
under the Jurisdiction of the Maine Land Use Planning Commission

March 28, 2013

Senator Cleveland, Representative Hobbins, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Ben Gilman and I represent the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, a statewide business organization made up of both large and small businesses, here to provide you with our testimony in opposition to **L.D. 616, An Act To Amend the Expedited Permitting Area for Wind Energy Development under the Jurisdiction of the Maine Land Use Planning Commission.**

Over the course of the last five years, the renewable energy industry has been one the leading investors in the State of Maine. Specifically, the wind industry has invested more than one billion into the Maine economy over that time frame. During our recent economic downturn this has been an important part of the Maine economy. Part of the reason for this increased investment was due to the expedited permitting process put into place by the legislature.

One of the key factors of the expedited process in place is to have consistency across the LURC jurisdiction. LD 616 proposes to carve out certain areas within LURC's jurisdictions and create a different process for wind energy development in these specific locations. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce does not believe that carving out certain jurisdictions from the expedited wind permitting process is good public policy precedent and would send the wrong message to an industry who has been a big part of our economy over the last few years.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with our testimony. I would be pleased to try and answer any questions you may have.