

To: Committee on Judiciary, Maine State Legislature  
From: Jackson Chadwick, Maine Youth for Climate Justice  
Date: Thursday, March 6, 2025  
RE: Testimony in opposition to L.D. 635: “Resolve, to Direct the Attorney General to Drop the Lawsuit Filed Against Big Oil Companies Concerning Climate Change”

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Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Jackson Chadwick. I am the Advocacy Director at Maine Youth for Climate Justice (MYCJ), a coalition of more than 500 youth and young adults who advocate for a just transition from fossil fuels toward a more sustainable future in which young Mainers can comfortably live, work, and prosper in our state. MYCJ members are high school and college students, environmental activists, and rural leaders seeking to better the state we call home.

I’m writing today on behalf of MYCJ in opposition to L.D. 635, which would direct the Maine Attorney General to relinquish the lawsuit against large oil companies, including Chevron, ExxonMobil, Shell, and Sunoco. In addition to other defendants in the lawsuit, these companies have caused irrevocable harm and damage to our air, ecosystems, and wildlife.

The Gulf of Maine is warming faster than the global average<sup>1</sup>. Rapid warming of ocean temperatures causes ocean acidification, changes in salinity, and sea level rise, which is already threatening Maine’s coastal communities.

The climate crisis has further impacts on our immediate natural environment and Maine’s marine and tourist-based economy, which sustains and creates thousands of year-round and seasonal jobs across our state<sup>2</sup>. Climate change is upending migration patterns and altering habitat boundaries, such as with Maine’s iconic lobstering industry, a staple of our economy and way of life. A 2024 report<sup>3</sup> found declining densities in lobster populations along the Maine coast and shifting of habitat bounds. Lobsters are also migrating north to Canada<sup>4</sup>, as the Gulf of Maine continues to warm.

This is all to say: we wouldn’t be in our current position if the aforementioned oil monopolies hadn’t polluted our Earth and had our government addressed the climate crisis decades ago, as scientists urged us to do.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, “[Effects of Climate Change on Aquaculture in the Gulf of Maine.](#)”

<sup>2</sup> Maine Office of Tourism, “[2023 Maine Office of Tourism Highlights.](#)”

<sup>3</sup> Jarrett RN II, Brady DC, Wahle RR, Steneck RS (2024) Shifts in habitat use and demography of American lobsters in coastal Maine (USA) over the past quarter century. *Mar Ecol Prog Ser* 746:87-98. <https://doi.org/10.3354/meps14691>

<sup>4</sup> News Center Maine, “[US lobster catch drops as crustaceans migrate to colder Canadian waters.](#)”

The Office of the Maine Attorney General is within its legal parameters and capabilities to sue the largest oil companies for deceiving the public and causing irreparable environmental destruction. We are beyond the point of reversing the damage already caused. Now, we must look forward to adapting and holding polluters accountable.

The youngest generations of Mainers, including those in low-income, coastal, and rural communities, will face the brunt of impacts. Therefore, Maine Youth for Climate Justice's members strongly implore you to consider our state's youth voices and futures and vote "ought to naught pass" on L.D. 635.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jackson Chadwick". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jackson Chadwick  
Maine Youth for Climate Justice  
Advocacy Director