

Langlin, Steven

From: Ron Huber <coastwatch@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2017 1:24 PM
To: Langlin, Steven
Subject: Re LD 901 - ocean wind concerns over adequacy of scenic impact thresholds for coastal communities

Dear Chairman Saviello and Chairman Tucker and the ENR committee

We are writing to request that the Environment and Natural Resources Committee amend LD 901 to include a 30 mile offshore windpower visual impact threshold in the bill's Visual impact assessment language, while keeping the other thresholds in the bill as they are.

We also ask that the committee direct Maine Coastal Program to update and complete its 1987 scenic survey of Midcoast Maine, including Monhegan. The 1987 report was never finalized with its required ground-truthing, yet is considered definitive. Under the 1987 report, Monhegan's seascapes and viewsheds were not examined, in detail, hence are not awarded any significance lack state or federal significance. Yet this is because the 1987 report never received "field verification" leaving Monhegan and many other locations unexamined, yet, in effect, their scenic assets considered to be of little or no local state or national significance.

This could let ocean windparks dominate Gulf of Maine viewsheds from the Maine coast with little accountability to the towns and cities whose Gulf of Maine viewsheds they would economically and physically dominate when operated at an 8 mile or even 15 mile offshore distance.

Dr Habib Dagher of the University of Maine leads this important initiative. He has always held with siting ocean windmills at least 25 miles offshore to prevent degradation of scenic assets. Please listen to his point of view.

We ask the committee to table the bill until amended to move the bill's offshore wind visual impact threshold out to 30 miles from shore, rather than eight miles, or 15 miles.

With the recent global leap in interest in floating ocean windmills, the University of Maine has attracted the attention of French naval contractor DCNS, which has already joined up with two floating windmill operations elsewhere on earth.

The political power this global alliance gives Maine Aqua Ventus is going to make it difficult for communities to be respectful of existing renewable resource operations also known as the scenic Maine coast.

Please preemptively protect our coastal communities immensely lucrative coastal tourism economy, by amended LD 901 as suggested. You will put Maine once again into a leadership role by promoting Dr Dagher's over-the-horizon philosophy of scenic protection.

Thank you

Ron Huber, executive director
Friends of Penobscot Bay

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Friends of Penobscot Bay
POB 1871, Rockland Maine 04841
FB: [facebook.com/penobscotbay](https://www.facebook.com/penobscotbay)
Web: www.penbay.net e coastwatch@gmail.com
tel: 207-691-7485 * cell 207-593-2744

