

SARGENT

C O R P O R A T I O N

Excellence for Generations.

March 23, 2017

Testimony of Stephen Perry
Business Development Manager
Sargent Corporation
Stillwater, Maine

Senator Saviello, Representative Tucker, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Stephen Perry and I'm the Business Development Manager for Sargent Corporation, an employee-owned construction company located in Stillwater, Maine and resident of Lincoln Maine.

I'm here today in strong opposition to the changes to Maine's visual impact laws as proposed in LD 901.

Sargent Corporation has been providing heavy civil earthwork for the Wind industry since 2005. Our company employs hundreds of hardworking Mainers, and we have come to depend on this industry for our livelihoods.

The increase in visual impact consideration from 8 miles to 15 miles would literally destroy the wind industry in Maine. We're talking about going from roughly 201 square miles to over 700 square miles for each prospective wind turbine, and yanking the heart out of one of the nation's most fertile areas for wind energy.

This 15-mile standard seems entirely arbitrary, and I can't help but think its sole purpose is to harm the Wind industry. We should not be regulating according to subjective standards.

While some folks may be bothered by the site of a wind tower, I'm not. I see 9 out of the 40 turbines from Evergreen Wind Power (Rollins Wind) from my front porch every morning as the sun comes up. When my wife and I kayak around Upper Cold Stream Pond on an early summer morning, I see the turbines spinning even as the lake is as calm as glass, I see jobs, I see clean, inexpensive energy and I see our economy growing and making Maine a better place to live.

Maine's economy needs all the help it can get right now. Through the recession, the Wind industry has kept our workers employed while the rest of the construction industry collapsed. Wind projects have brought more than \$1 billion in investment to Maine, and thousands of good-paying jobs.

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LD 901
March 23, 2017
Page 2

As a property owner in a town where the closing of a paper has eliminated a large portion of our tax revenue base (approximately 7%) I'm glad to report that in October of 2015, when the BDN reported on the Lincoln Paper Mill filing for bankruptcy, the town's top taxpayer was Evergreen Wind Power, at \$1.3 million, more than twice the amount of the closing paper mill.

If this bill becomes law, future investments like Evergreen Wind Power will evaporate. That means Maine's economy takes another brutal hit, and our workers may lose their jobs.

The Wind industry has been an incredibly positive development for our state. It's brought jobs, outside investment, and it's created a future industry that will help mitigate the collapse of so many of our other natural resource based industries.

I urge you to vote No on LD 901.

Thank you.