



Moosehead Region Futures Committee

PO Box 164 • Greenville Junction, ME 04442

Testimony Before the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on LD 901, HP 0629

*An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Determination of a Wind Energy
Development's Effect on the Scenic Character of Maine's Special Places*

March 23, 2017

Senator Saviello,
Representative Tucker,
Distinguished Members of the Committee:

My name is Christopher King, I live in Greenville, and I am Secretary of the Moosehead Region Futures Committee (MRFC), a Maine non-profit corporation, which has been active in shaping the Moosehead Lake Region's future development for more than a decade.

I wish to testify **in favor** of LD 901, and to urge the Committee to **adopt certain amendments** to this bill.

Specifically, the MRFC requests that the Committee amend LD 901, by adding to the language proposed in Section 3 (35-A MRSA §3452, sub-§4), paragraph B, the following subparagraphs:

- (6) Big Moose Mountain in Piscataquis County; and
- (7) Mount Kineo in Piscataquis County.

The purpose of LD 901 is to extend the protections granted by the Legislature in 35-A MRSA §3452 to Maine's scenic resources of state or national significance (SRSNS), defined with precision in 35-A MRSA §3451 (9), to certain SRSNSs which are situated between 8 and 15 miles from a proposed wind energy development's generating facilities. Currently, the Department of Environmental Protection "shall consider insignificant the effects of portions of [a wind energy] development's generating facilities located more than 8 miles...from a [SRSNS]." 35-A MRSA §3452 (3).

MRFC believes that, while the fifteen areas specified in proposed paragraph B are certainly among Maine's "Special Places", and deserving of the additional protections proposed in this bill, the two areas which MRFC urges the Committee to add to this list are no less special to Maine's residents and visitors alike.

Vistas at the summit of Big Moose Mountain, located less than 4 miles from the southwest shore of Moosehead Lake, and at the summit of Mount Kineo, located on the middle of the Lake, are accessed by popular trails, and extend well beyond 8 miles in all directions. The breathtaking views of the natural splendors of Maine's expansive North Woods afforded from these mountains are among the chief attractions of the Moosehead Lake Region.

Any "grid scale wind energy developments", defined at 35-A MRSA §3451 (6), situated on the ridge tops in the Moosehead Lake Region, will be highly visible from SRSNSs located between 8 and 15 miles from those developments, and therefore ought to be evaluated under the same criteria as other developments which might be proposed between 8 and 15 miles from the SRSNSs already specifically identified in LD 901.

If LD 901 is enacted, grid scale wind energy developments will hardly be prohibited in the expanded areas of "protection". Proposed developments situated between 8 and 15 miles from the specified SRSNSs will merely be considered under the Wind Energy Act's relaxed standards for evaluating

whether a “development has an unreasonable adverse effect on the scenic character or existing uses related to scenic character of the [SRSNS].” 35-A MRSA §3452 (1).

Both the summit of Big Moose Mountain, and all of Mount Kineo, are already SRSNSs, as defined by statute.

Attached to this written testimony is a map showing the areas within fifteen miles from the summits of Barren Mountain and White Cap Mountain (both of which are already specified in LD 901), as well as the areas within 15 miles of the summits of Big Moose Mountain and Mount Kineo, which MRFC proposes adding to LD 901. The map shows that 15-mile radii from White Cap and Barren will not bring the areas west and southwest of Moosehead Lake most likely to be targeted for grid-scale wind energy development within the areas which would gain protection under LD 901, but that 15-mile radii from Big Moose and Kineo will.

MRFC thanks the Committee for considering this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher A. King
Secretary,
Moosehead Region Futures Committee

Home address:
P.O. Box 106
Greenville Junction, ME 04442

chrisaking1@gmail.com