



District 71
Norway, Sweden,
Waterford, West Paris

State Representative Tom Winsor

E-mail twinsor@megalink.net

Committee on
Appropriations and
Financial Affairs

107 Thurston Rd
Norway ME 04268
207.527.2233 Home/fax
207.287.9991 Session
207.754.3678 Cell

Testimony in Support of
*"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"*
Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Senator Saviello, Representative Tucker, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. I'm Tom Winsor, Representing House District 71 which includes the towns of Norway, Sweden, Waterford, and West Paris. I am pleased to introduce LD 901 for your consideration. It is titled "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."

This proposal is a follow up to legislation I submitted, and was successfully passed into law during the 127th, LD 911. That legislation clarified definitions relating to the scenic impact of wind energy developments.

That bill also originally requested that any development within 15 miles of Acadia National Park, the Appalachian Trail, any federally defined wildness area, Baxter State Park, and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway would require a visual impact assessment. At the time the committee felt that this was too expansive but many members suggested to me that we name more specific locations in a new bill to be considered in this session.

The bill before you today lists 16 specific points that I believe have view sheds that should be preserved or at the very least the visual impact from development mitigated. These are locations that offer views of national importance and once gone will be gone forever.

These changes were recommended by an extensive study commissioned by the Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security which was released in March 2012. Recommendation 10 reads "Amend the wind law to identify "those regions and view sheds that are most critical to the state's recreational and tourism economy and would be unacceptably degraded by any significant level of wind power development" "and remove any area within fifteen miles of them from the Expedited Permitting Area...unless the wind project is not visible from them."

Remember at the time of this report most turbines were less than 400 feet in height and today they are approaching or exceeding 600 feet.

There will be folks following me who are much more articulate than I am with the specific details of this proposal, but I will be happy to answer any questions now or during the work session.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Winsor
State Representative