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GOVERNOR

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LAURA A. FORTMAN  
COMMISSIONER

May 6, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL), I am writing to express my strong support for the Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) *Dirigo Atlantic Floating Offshore Wind Port Project* application to the FY25-26 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Program. This port project will have a substantial, positive impact on Maine workers and the Maine economy.

As highlighted in the *Maine Offshore Wind Roadmap*, a port facility is a priority for unlocking Maine's opportunity in offshore wind to create good-paying jobs, spur broad economic development, and generate abundant clean electricity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, stabilize energy costs, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels consistent with the State's climate action plan, *Maine Won't Wait*.

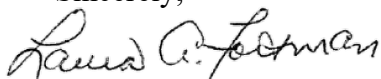
The Sears Island development provides an unprecedented opportunity to expand on Maine's existing talent and generate 1,300 family-sustaining jobs during port construction and 350 jobs during ongoing port operations. In accordance with Maine's P.L. 2023, Chapter 481, this project will adhere to robust worker compensation and benefit thresholds, local hiring guidelines, worker safety provisions, and apprenticeship utilization requirements – directly advancing the U.S. Department of Labor's Good Jobs Principles.

MDOL is committed to advancing high-quality job opportunities in the offshore wind industry by helping employers recruit and train a talented workforce, providing workers with the skills they need to be competitive in the economy through models such as registered apprenticeship, and ensuring safe and fair workplaces for people on the job. Upon award, MDOL will support the Sears Island development by:

- Collaborating with MaineDOT, training and education providers, labor unions, and other partners to strengthen the offshore wind workforce by advancing registered apprenticeship and certified pre-apprenticeship for key occupations such as electricians, technicians, welders, and fabricators – building on the Maine Apprenticeship Program's nearly 1,000 current apprentices in clean energy and transportation occupations.
- Connecting jobseekers to employment and training opportunities in the offshore wind industry and providing them with wraparound supports through our statewide CareerCenters and local workforce partners, with an explicit focus on priority communities including individuals with disabilities, veterans, people of color, and the re-entry and recovery communities.

The project is estimated to cost approximately \$760 million, with MaineDOT requesting \$456 million in MPDG funds. The remaining funds will be comprised of other federal, state, and private sector lease payments. I strongly support Maine's application for these federal funds, which will be critical to advancing efforts on this project in the immediate future and unlocking additional investments in clean energy generation and long-term local economic development opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura A. Fortman".

Laura A. Fortman  
Commissioner  
Maine Department of Labor