

Town of Searsport, Maine

P. O. Box 499

Searsport, Maine 04974

Phone 548-6372 • Fax 548-2305

May 2, 2024

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

We are writing to express our support of the Maine Department of Transportation's Searsport Offshore Wind Port Project 2024 Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) Grant application. The PIDP grant funds would support the pre-construction activities through Final Design accelerating the development of the Project.

The construction of the facility in Searsport could unlock the immense energy potential in the Gulf of Maine with the development and deployment of Floating Offshore Wind (FOSW). Consistent with the goals of the Biden Administration to deploy 15 Gigawatts (GW) of FOSW by 2035, construction of the port will also meet Maine's goal outlined in the Maine Energy Plan: Pathway to 2040 identifies the need for at least 3 GW of offshore wind with the goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2040. As offshore wind advances in the Gulf of Maine, Maine can leverage its existing deepwater port infrastructure to create additional economic opportunities for the state.

Our board has supported the concept of building a floating offshore wind facility in Maine from the beginning and have followed the process without interfering with the State's final decision on its location. We continue to support the development of Floating Offshore Wind and await the final permitted decision of its location through all Federal permitting including the NEPA permitting process. Final siting may impact our support of the grant application and we reserve the right to amend our support letter. We also acknowledge that it is critical to our community that a fair community benefits agreement be negotiated with our citizens to ensure that impacts from this development be mitigated to protect our quality of life.

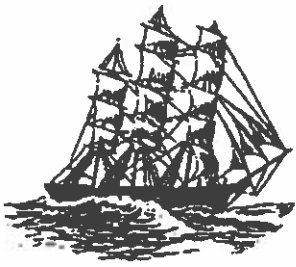
We support Maine's application for these federal funds which will be critical to advancing efforts on this project in the immediate future and unlocking additional investments in clean energy generation and long-term local economic development opportunities. With the construction of the port, we are confident Maine's leadership will contribute to growing domestic expertise and supply chain capabilities to support a robust offshore wind industry in the United States.

In summary, we are in support of this project and respectfully request your strong consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Norman". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Doug Norman
Chair
Searsport Selectboard



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May 7, 2024

Bruce Van Note, Commissioner MDOT
24 Child Street
Augusta, Maine 04330

Dear Commissioner Van Note

The Searsport Selectboard has long supported the concept of building a port facility to support the floating offshore wind industry in Maine. We were pleased to join you alongside Governor Mills in your March 2020 visit to Mack Point to announce the initial wind port planning process as well as your visit to our board in 2022 to outline the findings of the Moffatt and Nichol report. We remain appreciative of the work put forth by members of the Offshore Wind Port Advisory Group, which included Searsport residents and our town manager. The town closely followed the site selection process without interfering with the State's preference and we await the final permitted decision of its location through all Federal permitting, including the NEPA permitting process. With our recent December 2023 *Resolution in Support of the Offshore Wind Process*, the Searsport Selectboard has reaffirmed our full support of the State of Maine's commitment to a robust and open public process for the development of floating offshore wind.

While we remain enthused by the prospect of a port facility for floating offshore wind, we are eager to learn more about the State of Maine's plans for a port facility in Searsport. We understand that since the Governor's February 2024 announcement of the preferred site for a port facility, the State has begun assembling materials for permitting and has submitted applications for Federal grants to support the buildout of the port. While these efforts have progressed, no effort has been made to engage directly with the community of Searsport or this Selectboard.

We respectfully request that the MaineDOT and the Governor's Energy Office establish a more regular cadence of engagement with this board and with the community of Searsport. We invite you and your colleagues from the MaineDOT and the Governor's Energy Office to Searsport for an informational meeting in the next several months so we may all learn more about the State's plans for a port facility, considerations regarding your site preference, and the potential benefits and implications that this project will bring to our town.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Norman". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Doug Norman

Chair

Searsport Selectboard