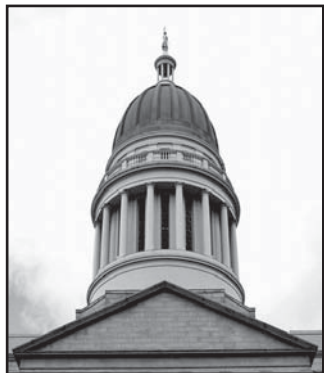


Legislative Update: Wind

By PATRICE McCARRON

Wind energy bill LD 1810 was rushed to public hearing before the Committee on Utilities and Energy just one week after the bill was made available to the public. This complex bill spanned 35 pages, representing a variety of recommendations from the Ocean Energy Task Force.



Marine Resources (DMR) or the fishing industry.

The MLA advocated for the establishment of a process to consult the fishing industry on any potential ocean energy development. The state

The Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA) submitted testimony in opposition to LD 1810, citing two major concerns for the lobster industry. First, the bill contained a provision for a competitive solicitation for offshore wind, tidal and wave energy development in Maine's coastal waters, including the negotiation of a long-term contract. The MLA strongly opposed any permanent commercial development of ocean wind in state waters, and this provision was removed in the amended bill. Instead, the bill directs a state agency to make recommendations regarding competitive solicitation for renewable ocean energy by January 2012. The amended bill also directs the state to solicit projects for deep water offshore wind. These projects must be more than 10 miles from shore and at least 300 feet in depth, and they are to be up and running within five years.

Second, the bill proposed application and permitting procedures for ocean energy developments, but did not include consultation with Maine Department of

must consider comments provided by lobster zone council and the DMR Advisory Council when determining if a project would unreasonably interfere with existing marine uses. The amended bill requires DMR to be consulted during the pre-application process through an inter-agency process. The affected lobster zone councils and the DMR Advisory Council must also be notified and have the ability to provide comments on the impacts of proposed projects on existing fishing efforts. The amended bill directs the state to avoid and minimize any harm to existing public trust uses, such as fishing and navigation, and to consider potential adverse effects on existing uses of the marine environment. It establishes a Renewable Ocean Energy Trust to fund research, monitoring and other efforts to avoid, minimize and compensate for potential adverse effects of renewable ocean energy projects.

The Utilities and Energy Committee voted in support of an amended bill on March 24.

Wind discussion flies at Forum

By HEATHER TETREAU

Wind farms in state waters were a big topic of conversation at the Maine Fishermen's Forum.

During the March 6 session, seven speakers presented the multifaceted aspects of the approved wind farm test sites in Maine state waters.

At the close of 2009, the Governor's Task Force on Ocean Energy designated three test sites in Maine waters in order to assess the viability of future offshore commercial wind farms. Maine is an ideal test site since there is deep water close to the shoreline. The Task Force's goal is to have technology developed for offshore wind farms by 2020.

Beth Nagusky from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and Commissioner George Lapointe of the Maine Department of Marine Resources presented recommendations from the Task Force.

Nagusky discussed the average energy requirement in New England and how wind turbines would meet that power need. The ultimate goal, she said, is for commercial offshore wind energy farms to reduce the state's carbon footprint, reduce heating costs and reduce overall energy costs.

Lapointe raised questions such as: What will wind energy do for the state of Maine? Will there be any direct compensation for the state or affected fishermen? And what future issues, such as fishing gear complications, will exist? Lapointe urged fishermen to think about these questions to help them understand what wind energy would mean to fishermen and their communities.

Representatives from commercial wind energy turbine businesses discussed their experiences with wind farm development in other places. Des Fitzgerald represented the Seattle-based Principal Powers, which has proposed test sites for wind platforms off the coasts of Portugal, Oregon and Maine. Daniel Cohn represented the New Jersey-based Fishermen's Energy, which was founded and developed by fishermen. As developers of wind energy, these companies are excited about the potential to develop commercial wind off the Maine coast. Fitzgerald discussed plans to develop offshore wind energy platforms which would be

floating platforms with ballast. These platforms would be tethered to the bottom, and interconnected with cables that ultimately run inshore to connect to the grid. As floating technologies, these platforms would move with the wind direction for consistent generation of energy.

Dr. Neal Pettigrew, from the University of Maine reviewed the process for testing and deploying turbines in the test sites. The University has received a \$12.4 million grant from the U.S. Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology for construction of its new deepwater offshore wind energy research and testing facility. The University will monitor the three test sites, including environmental impacts. Turbine deployment is tentatively scheduled for 2011.

The panel also explored the community perspective on wind power. Addison Ames, a Vinalhaven lobsterman and a Fox Island Electric Cooperative board member, discussed some of the concerns related to the use of wind turbines. Ames reported that the wind turbines on Vinalhaven have been well received by the majority of the community, though there are still a few individuals concerned with the noise associated with operation.

Robert Snyder, the Vice President of Programs for the Island Institute, discussed the Institute's plan to engage fishermen and coastal community members in mapping ocean uses. The Institute is conducting a pilot mapping project to explore how the fishing industry might participate and benefit from marine spatial planning efforts. The pilot mapping project may also provide a mechanism to identify important fishing grounds in future wind farm placement conversations, he said.

The question and answer session revolved around how offshore wind farms could benefit the state and who would ultimately own the energy produced offshore. Fishermen asked questions to try to understand the impact of state's energy goals and the corresponding footprint needed to achieve those goals in the ocean. Nagusky responded that the Task Force initiative for test sites in state waters will provide the information needed to make the necessary economically- and environmentally-based

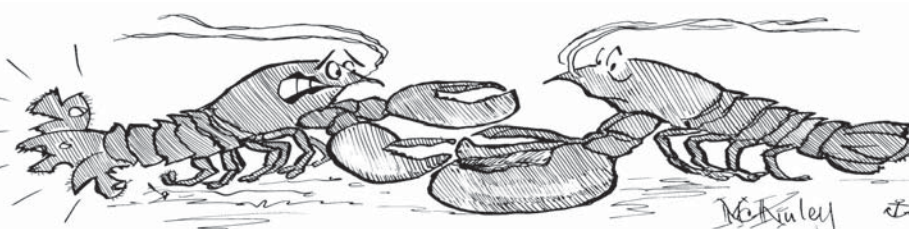
decisions on how Maine will move forward.



International lobstermen meet Maine lobstermen in Northeast Harbor.

Commercial Fisheries News

The Northeast's Fishing Newspaper for over 35 years
Po Box 37, Stonington, ME 04681



CFN has the latest:

- Market Reports
- Along the Coast
- State news columns
- Enforcement Report

Other favorites include:

- Classifieds
- Brian Robbins' Bearin's
- News Catch
- Lobster boat races
- New Boats
- And more...
- Fleet additions
- Letters to the Editor!

There is so much more!

*So subscribe today and you get a great deal as a member of this association. **Only \$18.75** for one year and save more than \$14.00 off the regular newsstand rate. **WOW, what a savings!***

Call Katie
800-989-5253

Mention this Code: MLA

