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## **Maine AGC, EETC, ACE and other Maine associations support MWII**

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Six major Maine trades and professional associations came together last week to create an unprecedented agreement of collaboration to support the Maine Wind Industry Initiative (MWII) efforts to promote new business opportunities in wind and ocean energy. MWII works to promote new opportunities for services and products for development in Maine, and for export. The agreement represents an exceptional opportunity to capture a significant economic opportunity for the state of Maine. The collaboration addresses the needs of all the major supply chain categories for wind and ocean energy.

The associations included the Associated General Contractors of Maine, the Manufacturers Association of Maine, the Maine Composites Alliance, The Maine Marine Trades Association, The Environmental and Energy Technology Council of Maine, the Maine Chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies, and the Maine Wind Industry Initiative. The Maine Port Authority, a principal founding member of MWII, was also present and provided input for the agreement.

Companies represented by each organization have experienced growth in wind and ocean energy. The associations represent a combined total of over 1,000 Maine companies employing nearly 30,000 Maine workers, an impressive portion of the Maine workforce. The collaboration between the associations will foster additional opportunities for Maine companies to become involved in this rapidly advancing field. There is potential for wind and ocean energy development in Maine to create nearly 18,000 new regional jobs in the next 15 years. All the association directors concur with the need to develop new energy sources for the future of Maine's economy. Wind and ocean energy allows Maine to capture the local job growth benefit while developing new energy resources that also provide environmental benefits.

Wind energy in Maine has already made noteworthy investment in Maine nearing \$8 million. "The state of Maine will not see another opportunity of this scale in our lifetime" said Patrick Arnold of the Maine Port Authority. To date, Maine has benefitted from new jobs in environmental sciences, engineering, construction, maintenance and operation, legal and professional services, and manufacturing. The public discourse has focused largely on the construction and maintenance jobs. However, the other job categories represent nearly 80% of the potential jobs. "Our research has found that the greatest demands include project management and manufacturing technicians" said Steve Von Vogt of the Maine Composites Alliance. MCA partnered with MWII, Main(e) International Consultants and On Point Research last fall to do a comprehensive analysis of the job market opportunities and needed training. "Most people are not talking about or aware of the best opportunities for job creation in wind power," added Von Vogt.

Some of the immediate opportunities for Maine companies may include: steel rolling for tower and

pile manufacturing, developing new composite components to compliment or replace steel components, turbine component machining, blade maintenance and repair, and building installation and support vessels for offshore projects permitted in states to the south and tidal energy projects in Maine. However, all of these opportunities require successful continuation of the energy resource development in order to reach the required market demand to create new services and products.

The agreement sets a foundation for MWII as an industry- led organization of Associations and provides additional capabilities to MWII by leveraging the strengths and relationships of the six associations. Some of the key elements of the agreement include: establishing a board of industry advisors that represent all the major supply chain categories for wind and ocean energy manufacturing and development; performing a comprehensive analysis of capabilities of Maine companies to respond to growing opportunities; identifying additional market opportunities for Maine businesses; creation of advanced tools to identify economic development resources; and building a collaborative effort to share and promote workforce development and educational resources.

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