

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FIVE

H.P. 200 - L.D. 300

Resolve, to Direct the Governor's Energy Office to Study Expanding the Use of Hydroelectric Power and the Development of a Geothermal Power Plant in the State

Sec. 1. Governor's Energy Office to conduct studies. Resolved: That the Governor's Energy Office, referred to in this resolve as "the office," shall conduct studies as directed by this resolve in consultation with the Public Utilities Commission, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, Maine Emergency Management Agency to support the development of a balanced portfolio of energy sources in the State.

Sec. 2. Study; hydroelectric power facilities and energy storage. Resolved: That the office shall conduct a study reviewing the current operation of and opportunities for the expansion of hydroelectric power and energy storage in the State for the purpose of evaluating methods to revitalize the hydroelectric power industry while taking into consideration the greenhouse gas emissions associated with such generation and storage. In conducting this study, the office shall:

1. Review the findings of any previous studies of hydroelectric power facilities in the State, including, but not limited to, the February 2015 report prepared for the office and titled "Maine Hydropower Study," to identify dam sites within the State that have the greatest potential to be efficiently expanded or upgraded;

2. Review new technologies being used in hydroelectric power facilities in other states and evaluate whether those technologies could be used in this State to improve or expand the hydroelectric power industry through the expansion or upgrading of the dam sites identified under subsection 1. In carrying out this review, the office shall consult with at least one hydroelectric power facility in Alaska and at least one hydroelectric power facility in each of 2 other states that the office determines has similar geographic and topographical characteristics to Maine; and

3. Identify locations within the State that may be suitable for the development of pumped storage hydropower systems because of geographic, technical and economic factors and evaluate the existing barriers to establishing such hydroelectric energy storage systems.

Sec. 3. Study; geothermal systems. Resolved: That the office shall conduct a study for the purpose of evaluating the potential for the development of a geothermal power plant or other geothermal power plant generation system or space heating and cooling system in this State based on an assessment of geographic, technical and economic factors. For the purposes of this resolve, "geothermal power plant" means a power plant that uses heat from the earth to generate electricity or thermal energy for heating or cooling. The study must summarize research and analysis of opportunities for the development of geothermal systems in the State while taking into consideration the greenhouse gas emissions associated with such systems. The office is not required to include specific cost data or a technical economic assessment of individual sites in the study. In conducting this study, the office shall:

1. Consult with persons with expertise in the geologic engineering field, including persons employed by State Government or Federal Government, regarding the feasibility of establishing a geothermal power plant in the State. Using the existing resources of the office, the office may seek a formal opinion or report from such persons. If the office concludes, as a result of the office's consultation, that a geothermal power plant could be developed in the State in a cost-effective way, as determined by the office, the office shall develop recommendations for the development of a geothermal power plant in the State; and

2. Assess the potential for developing district geothermal systems:

- A. On brownfield sites in the State, as determined by the office in consultation with the Department of Environmental Protection; and

- B. At state-owned facilities or on state-owned properties.

Sec. 4. Reports. Resolved: That, no later than January 15, 2027, the office shall submit a report based on each study under this resolve, including any recommendations, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters. The joint standing committee may report out legislation related to the reports to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.