

May 17, 2021

Subject: Written Testimony
Northern Maine dual transmission/generation procurement bill, LR 1710

Dear **Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee Members:**

S. W. Cole Engineering, Inc., is a geotechnical engineering firm headquartered in Bangor, Maine. We employ over 100 people; engineers, scientists and technicians throughout New England. We have been providing services on power projects in Maine and New England for about 40 years.

We support LR 1710 because we believe in energy from renewable sources and believe in developing renewable and sustainable resources right here in Maine using Maine companies and Maine employees. A bottleneck that has existed in this state is the under-sized transmission infrastructure connecting northern Maine and our energy load in southern Maine. We understand this bill would establish the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program, to be administered by the Public Utilities Commission with the purpose of removing obstacles and establishing the best ways to development the potential renewable energy resources in northern Maine. Hopefully this will help attract energy project developers to our state.

We were provided the following talking points and we agree with them:

- A transmission line & new renewable generation along it will help unlock the resources of Northern Maine
- Represents billions of dollars of capital investment in Northern Maine, one of the most exciting and robust investments ever
- Thousands of construction jobs over multiple years
- Scores of long-term operations and maintenance jobs on the transmission line as well as at the wind and solar farms
- The competition would be open to all kinds of renewable energy, including wind, solar, geothermal, hydro, energy storage and biomass – and it allows them to compete on a cost basis
- Unleashes the power of competition, particularly among transmission providers, to find the best routes and lowest-cost solutions
- Encourages the state to think long-term, by planning for the renewable energy resources that will match up with the state's future grid and load requirements
- LD 1710 promises to generate millions in economic benefits each year through jobs, payroll, state and local taxes

- Avoids millions of tons of planet-warming emissions each year
- Advances the goals of the Maine Climate Council and the State of Maine Renewable Energy Market Assessment
- People and businesses in Aroostook County have been hoping for exactly this kind of investment for decades – and with one fell swoop, Maine could make a quantum leap toward meeting both the 2030 and 2050 climate goals as well; would bring much needed investment to a socially-vulnerable part of the state
- For the transmission line, gives preference to existing rights of way to avoid contentious land-use battles

We urge you to support LR 1710.

Sincerely,

S. W. Cole Engineering, Inc.



Paul F. Kohler, P.E.
Senior Vice President