



131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1489

H.P. 944

House of Representatives, April 5, 2023

Resolve, to Capitalize on Opportunities from Newly Revised Federal Renewable Fuels Standards by Studying the Environmental and Economic Benefits of Electric and Steam Generation Facilities Powered by Biomass

Reference to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology suggested and ordered printed.

Handwritten signature of Robert B. Hunt in cursive.

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative THERIAULT of Fort Kent.
Cosponsored by Representative: BABIN of Fort Fairfield.

1 **Sec. 1. Study of biomass-powered combined heat and power facilities.**

2 **Resolved:** That the Public Utilities Commission shall undertake or contract with
3 appropriate experts for a study of the environmental and economic benefits of electric and
4 steam generation facilities powered by biomass, referred to in this section as "CHP
5 facilities." The study must examine the benefits resulting from 20 megawatts, 40 megawatts
6 and 60 megawatts, respectively, of electric generation, capacity and thermal energy from
7 CHP facilities. The study must examine, at a minimum, the potential benefits of CHP
8 facilities related to:

9 A. Qualifying for renewable energy credits for electricity and thermal energy from
10 federal agencies;

11 B. Meeting base load supply, capacity and reliability needs of the electric grid;

12 C. The potential for supporting integrated infrastructures that support carbon
13 sequestration and district heating, produce biofuels, such as biodiesel, jet fuel and home
14 heating oil, and service other industrial or commercial enterprises that could
15 productively use the steam or electricity produced by CHP facilities;

16 D. Converting forest and lumber mill residuals into usable electricity and steam;

17 E. Processing residuals for the production of biochar and graphene and supporting the
18 capture of carbon dioxide;

19 F. The potential for improving rural economies, including benefits from the effects on
20 local tax revenues and through the creation of forest-related jobs; and

21 G. Reducing carbon emissions from the transportation of biomass and displacement
22 of fossil fuel generation facilities.

23 The study must also include a full life-cycle analysis of carbon and other greenhouse
24 gas emissions resulting from CHP facilities as compared with those resulting from electric
25 generation systems that rely on other renewable resources and systems that rely on fossil
26 fuels.

27 **Sec. 2. Review and report. Resolved:** That the Public Utilities Commission shall
28 ensure that the results of the study under section 1 are peer-reviewed and shall submit a
29 final report of the results of the study to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities
30 and Technology by February 1, 2024. The committee may report out a bill to the Second
31 Regular Session of the 131st Legislature related to the subject matter of the report.

32 **SUMMARY**

33 This resolve directs the Public Utilities Commission to undertake or contract with
34 appropriate experts for a study of the environmental and economic benefits of electric and
35 steam generation facilities powered by biomass. The study must examine the benefits
36 resulting from 20 megawatts, 40 megawatts and 60 megawatts, respectively, of electric
37 generation, capacity and thermal energy from such facilities. The commission is required
38 to ensure that the study results are peer-reviewed and to submit a final report of the results
39 of the study to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology by
40 February 1, 2024. The committee is authorized to report out a bill to the Second Regular
41 Session of the 131st Legislature related to the subject matter of the report.