

Date:

(Filing No. H-)

ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY

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**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
132ND LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 1073, L.D. 1619, “Resolve, to Establish a Commission to Study Pathways for Creating a Thermal Energy Networks Program in Maine”

Amend the resolve by striking out the title and substituting the following:

'Resolve, to Direct the Governor's Energy Office to Solicit Information Regarding the Creation of a Thermal Energy Networks Program in Maine'

Amend the resolve by striking out everything after the title and inserting the following:

'Sec. 1. Request for information. Resolved: That the Governor's Energy Office shall, within existing resources, issue a request for information regarding the creation of a thermal energy networks program in the State. For the purposes of this resolve, "thermal energy network" means a system of interconnected piping that circulates thermal transfer water for the purpose of providing low-emissions heating and cooling to 2 or more buildings through the use of water source heat pumps at each building connected to the system. The primary thermal energy source for such a network may include, but is not limited to, geothermal resources or recovered thermal energy, such as waste heat captured from buildings or wastewater systems. When issuing the request for information, the office shall solicit information from stakeholders regarding:

1. Any relevant available research, framework, pilot projects and other information on the total cost, cost savings and efficiencies realized in thermal energy networks across the country;

2. The feasibility and applicability of thermal energy networks for residential, commercial and industrial sectors in the State, which may include information related to:

A. Geophysical considerations;

B. Compatibility with incumbent air source heat pumps and other heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems;

C. Permitting and right-of-way considerations;

- 1 D. Constraints around geographic density; and
- 2 E. Other considerations that demonstrate the total building heating and cooling load
- 3 potential of thermal energy networks;
- 4 3. Recommended processes for facilitating and encouraging thermal energy networks
- 5 pilot projects, including ownership structures and cost recovery mechanisms;
- 6 4. Life-cycle costs and benefits of thermal energy networks, including comparisons to
- 7 incumbent heating and cooling technologies;
- 8 5. Potential electric grid impacts, such as smoothing winter and summer peaks and
- 9 lowering system costs by avoiding or deferring investments in additional electrical
- 10 generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure;
- 11 6. The suitability of thermal energy network technology for helping to meet the State's
- 12 statutory emissions reduction goals;
- 13 7. Labor and workforce needs associated with developing thermal energy networks in
- 14 the State, including consideration of job quality, supplying a skilled and ready workforce,
- 15 licensing and registered apprenticeship and certified preapprenticeship programs;
- 16 8. Funding opportunities and cost recovery mechanisms, including, but not limited to:
- 17 A. Leveraging applicable tax credits available under the federal Inflation Reduction
- 18 Act of 2022 and other federal assistance;
- 19 B. Funding from the New England Heat Pump Accelerator;
- 20 C. The Thermal Energy Investment Program established in the Maine Revised Statutes,
- 21 Title 35-A, section 10128; and
- 22 D. Rebates for heat pumps through the Efficiency Maine Trust; and
- 23 9. The role thermal energy networks can play in increasing the affordability of housing,
- 24 development and energy.

25 **Sec. 2. Report. Resolved:** That the Governor's Energy Office shall prepare, in
26 consultation with the Efficiency Maine Trust and the Public Advocate, a summary report
27 regarding the information received by the office in accordance with section 1 and, by
28 January 15, 2026, submit the report to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities
29 and Technology. The office may develop and include in the report recommendations
30 regarding the development of a thermal energy networks program in the State. The joint
31 standing committee may report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd
32 Legislature based on the report.'

33 Amend the resolve by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or
34 section number to read consecutively.

35 SUMMARY

36 This amendment replaces the resolve and changes the title. It directs the Governor's
37 Energy Office to, within existing resources, issue a request for information regarding the
38 creation of a thermal energy networks program in the State. When issuing the request for
39 information, the office is required to solicit information from stakeholders regarding
40 various considerations related to the development of a thermal energy networks program.

1 By January 15, 2026, the office must prepare, in consultation with the Efficiency Maine
2 Trust and the Public Advocate, a summary report regarding the information received by
3 the office and submit the report to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and
4 Technology. The office may develop and include in the report recommendations regarding
5 the development of a thermal energy networks program in the State.

6 **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

7 **(See attached)**