

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FIVE

—
H.P. 1073 - L.D. 1619

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

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;
 - D. Constraints around geographic density; and
 - E. Other considerations that demonstrate the total building heating and cooling load potential of thermal energy networks;
3. Recommended processes for facilitating and encouraging thermal energy networks pilot projects, including ownership structures and cost recovery mechanisms;
4. Life-cycle costs and benefits of thermal energy networks, including comparisons to incumbent heating and cooling technologies;

5. Potential electric grid impacts, such as smoothing winter and summer peaks and lowering system costs by avoiding or deferring investments in additional electrical generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure;

6. The suitability of thermal energy network technology for helping to meet the State's statutory emissions reduction goals;

7. Labor and workforce needs associated with developing thermal energy networks in the State, including consideration of job quality, supplying a skilled and ready workforce, licensing and registered apprenticeship and certified preapprenticeship programs;

8. Funding opportunities and cost recovery mechanisms, including, but not limited to:

A. Leveraging applicable tax credits available under the federal Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 and other federal assistance;

B. Funding from the New England Heat Pump Accelerator;

C. The Thermal Energy Investment Program established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 10128; and

D. Rebates for heat pumps through the Efficiency Maine Trust; and

9. The role thermal energy networks can play in increasing the affordability of housing, development and energy.

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