

Dear EUT Committee Members et al,

Re: LD 1850 - An Act Relating to Energy Storage and the State's Energy Goals

My purpose in testifying is to do my best to make sure you have, or have access to, the best, most current, information regarding the subject of the above legislative document. It is my general opinion that the GEO has not done a good job of planning and implementing our state energy policy, and in fact there has been a very costly rush to be early adopters on far too wide a scale. Maine has historically been more inclined to sit back and wait for “bugs” to work themselves out – and prices to drop – before investing in advanced technology that few people understand. Not so with energy.

So, in researching energy and climate and transportation issues, I have come across some interesting perspectives on storage and other aspects of the energy conversation. Of particular note, it is seldom mentioned that we need to be very alert to the timeline for deployment of technologies. Early adoption is very expensive. Our ratepayers are paying the price for Maine leading the pack.

Think out 10, 20 30 years from now and where we will be. Based on performance to date, we will reach what is best described as a financial Cliff by then. Much of our early efforts will be obsolete, inoperative, deteriorating, and in great need of recycling and replacement. When you look back at what we are doing, will you be wondering why you made the decisions you made? Will you be struggling with how we will afford the Cliff of replace and recycle? Do you hope that by then the prices will drop and technical advances will offset the costs of tearing down fields of solar panels and battery storage systems. Do you know that the realistic cost to truly recycle the harmful chemicals in solar is over \$100 per panel?

It would be nice if we could “store” energy in small clumps that could be used over and over for hundreds of years. Lordie, Lordie, there is a way, developed by mother nature herself, to fill that energy gap at night and when the wind isn’t blowing. Thorium. In a structure the size of a school bus, a Thorium reactor can power 30,000 houses during periods of low renewable generation. It can also boost supply in case the regional demand should exceed regional renewable generation.

You have a choice. Do you only deal with the immediate need for off-hour storage. Or do you adopt the long-range perspective of multi-century infrastructure which is nuclear - NOT batteries. The science would suggest that you will in due time have to adopt nuclear just because there aren’t enough materials to feed the World’s growing demand for anything else. Put your money in a safe place and let some other state lead the way. Or join the advanced nuclear age today. Batteries just add to the costs of other renewable sources.

Kenneth A. Capron, ret. CPA, Systems Engineer
1375 Forest Avenue D-11
Portland, ME 04103
207-797-7891
kcapron1@maine.rr.com | maglev@maine.rr.com
[Southern Maine Research Institute]
[SkyWay by MicroRail]