

Sharon Sprague
CORINTH
LD 2087

To members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. I am submitting testimony regarding LD 2087 An Act to Protect Property Owners by Preventing the Use of Eminent Domain to Build Transmission Lines Under the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program. I am writing to express my support for this bill. As a landowner affected by the transmission line route previously proposed by LS Power I am concerned that my property will be taken by eminent domain by other companies in the future. I have owned my property for over 30 years and enjoy being surrounded by nothing but nature so you can imagine my fear of replacing that cherished scenic value with huge towers. To have no say about the impact to my property seems quite unfair to me. Taking my property by eminent domain gives me no voice, loss of my beautiful sunsets, loss of property value and lessens my choices for the future. If eminent domain is utilized by a utility company to use my property the only fair compensation is to buy my entire property at its greatest value and help to relocate me to a different property of my choosing. I do not believe that eminent domain needs to be as great an issue for this transmission corridor as it currently is as most of the problem disappears if the line is placed in existing corridors and buried where appropriate. As our neighboring states have successfully dealt with these difficult issues perhaps the committee can consult with them to determine the best course of action. Additionally I question whether eminent domain is justified to run a transmission line through the majority of our state to get power from Aroostook County to southern Maine and Massachusetts. I am aware that some people in Aroostook County welcome the money they will receive for the use of their property but wouldn't the hardship of eminent domain would be lessened by putting the wind farm closer to the southern part of the state? I am told by a legislator that property is too expensive in the southern part of the state and that northern Maine is a "cheap date" as farmers are eager to be paid for their land. I am from Aroostook County originally and do not mean to deprive anyone of an income but common sense says to me that many of the issues regarding the cost of building this transmission line and the property owner concerns, including eminent domain, greatly lessen with a wind farm built closer to the power needs of southern Maine and Massachusetts. Thank you for your consideration.