



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON
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January 23, 2024

Senator Mark Lawrence
Representative S. Paige Zeigler
Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and esteemed members of the Committee,

I am writing regarding LD 2077, *An Act Regarding Customer Costs and the Environmental and Health Effects of Natural Gas*.

Access to a variety of energy sources, including natural gas, is an asset to companies and investors who are considering Maine. Businesses often rely on several different sources of energy, as a diversified energy portfolio helps to ensure business continuity in the event of price fluctuations or extreme weather events.

Stable energy sources are key to business retention and attraction. Limiting or controlling how much and/or what type(s) of energy a business uses greatly reduces a business's operational flexibility. If natural gas prices go down, a business may want to use more natural gas. If natural gas prices go up, a business may want to use something other than natural gas. These energy decisions are for the business to make based on their operational parameters, cash flow, business plan, and other factors.

The Department supports the recommendation of the Governor's Energy Office to initiate a public process that will include evaluation of safety, energy affordability and reliability for Maine people and businesses over time. It is our recommendation that such a process include consultation with utilities and other stakeholders. Thank you for the opportunity to share these comments.

Heather Johnson
Commissioner, Department of Economic and Community Development