

February 27, 2025

Honorable Peggy Rotundo, Senate Chair  
Honorable Drew Gattine, House Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs  
c/o Office of Fiscal and Program Review  
5 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Letter of Support from Kenneth A. Colburn Relating to Part LL of LD 210, An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Members of the Committee:

I write to express my strong support for the actions proposed in Part LL of the above-referenced legislation.

By way of background, before retiring in 2020, I spent 30 years as an energy and environmental professional, advising regulators, policy makers, and advocates across the United States after serving as a regulator myself. For the last five years, I have served as the co-chair of the Energy Working Group of the Maine Climate Council. In addition, I've been a member of the Efficiency Maine Trust board for the last four years.

As you may recognize, we are in the midst of a massive transformation of the energy sector due to technological disruption. Solar and wind are now the cheapest power sources, but they are intermittent and thus require backup until energy storage achieves cost parity. In the last century, we overbuilt expensive electricity supply resources to meet infrequent grid peak periods. In the next century, we will manage electricity demand instead, balancing it with available, low-cost, renewable generation plus storage. Beneficial electrification will be crucial in creating the necessary flexibility. The more effectively we electrify energy end-uses like transportation and heating, the smoother and more cost-effective the energy transition will be for Maine ratepayers.

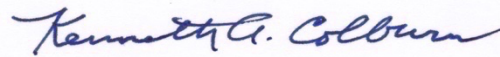
Energy is the driver of our economy and our society. Comprehensive transformation in the energy sector therefore warrants similarly substantive change in how energy policy is addressed. This is particularly true with respect to how Maine plans, manages, and ensures that all its people and businesses have access to safe, reliable, affordable, and clean energy.

Establishing the Maine Department of Energy Resources is commensurate with the magnitude of these changing responsibilities. Establishing a cabinet-level energy presence will also provide greater stability, policy alignment, and accountability than a gubernatorial office, creating a more stable environment to grow Maine's businesses, workforce, climate and efficiency efforts, staff expertise and retention, and overall effectiveness.

Safe, reliable, affordable, and clean energy is fundamental to Mainers' quality of life. State policy treatment of this cornerstone lies appropriately at the cabinet level, so I wholeheartedly endorse the proposal reflected in Part LL of LD 210.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. If you have any questions or require further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,



Kenneth A. Colburn  
Principal