

**Testimony before the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology in support of
LD 810, *An Act Regarding the Approval of Transmission Lines***

March 11, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Phelps Turner, and I am a Senior Attorney and the Clean Grid Director at Conservation Law Foundation (CLF). I appreciate this opportunity to testify in support of LD 596, Resolve, to Provide Legislative Approval of Northern Maine Transmission Infrastructure.

CLF, founded in 1966, is a public interest advocacy group that works to solve the environmental and energy challenges threatening the people, natural resources and communities in Maine and across New England. In Maine for almost four decades, CLF is a member-supported organization that works to ensure that laws and policies are developed, implemented and enforced that protect and restore our natural resources; are good for Maine's economy and environment; and equitably address the climate crisis.

Under 35-A M.R.S. §3132(6-C), a high-impact electric transmission line may not be constructed anywhere in the state without obtaining both a certificate of public convenience and necessity and the approval of the Legislature. LD 810 provides that a high-impact transmission line “proposed by a state agency pursuant to a requirement of law or by a state agency established by law with specific authority to propose such a line is deemed to have received the majority legislative approval required.” LD 810 thereby streamlines the process for approving such lines.

By streamlining the process for legislative approval for this category of high-impact transmission lines “proposed by a state agency pursuant to a requirement of law or by a state agency established by law with specific authority to propose such a line,” LD 810 helps to advance the public interest in Maine. For instance, transmission lines considered under the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program, 35-A M.R.S. § 3210-I, may qualify under the terms of LD 810. Such projects will advance the public interest in Maine. Indeed, the Legislature ordered the Maine Public Utilities Commission to administer the program, and to ensure that such administration “accounts for and is designed to advance the renewable energy and climate policies and goals of the state.”¹ LD 810 helps advance Maine's public policy and public interest. Further, LD 810 does not alter or negate existing state permitting requirements for such lines.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 810.

¹ 35-A M.R.S. § 3210(1), <https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/35-A/title35-Asec3210-I.html>. These renewable energy and climate policies and goals include the public policies outlined by the Legislature under 35-A M.R.S. § 3210, <https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/35-A/title35-Asec3210.html>, and 38 M.R.S. § 576-A, <https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/38/title38sec576-A.html>.