

Public Hearing, March 11 2025

LD 596 "Resolve, to Provide Legislative Approval of Northern Maine Transmission Infrastructure" and LD 810 "An Act Regarding the Approval of Transmission Lines"

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and Members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology:

My name is Brook DeLorme, and I am providing testimony in opposition to LD 596 and LD 810. Until recently, I lived in Maine. I now live in New Hampshire. In 2023, I became very involved with the topic of transmission lines after encountering the Aroostook Renewable Gateway proposal, which would have crossed thousands of acres of forest and farmland. This project was canceled.

In 2021, Maine voted at referendum to **require Legislative approval of transmission lines.**¹ Both LD 810 and LD 596 seek to **subvert the intended purpose of that referendum vote.**

I emailed the Maine PUC two weeks ago and asked when they were planning to release a Request for Proposal for the Northern Maine wind and transmission project. **The PUC does not have a date for releasing an RFP.**

In fact, the **PUC's next step is to release an RFI**, which will be the **third request for information** on this project.² In addition, the PUC needs to coordinate this project with an RFP from ISO-NE to improve the transmission capacity at the Maine-New Hampshire border.³

Based on those items, I expect we are more than a year from seeing an RFP from the Maine PUC.

Thus, LD 596 is very pre-mature because, with respects to a Northern Maine transmission line, there is:

- No route
- No electrical generation source
- No plan
- No proposal
- No price
- No vendor or contractor
- No known cost to the ratepayers

The lack of tangible details means that any approval would undermine the clearly voiced intention of Maine voters: that the legislature approve future transmission lines.

To misinterpret the 2021 referendum outcome to imply that voters wanted the legislature to approve transmission lines ***in the abstract, with no details about locations or impacts***, stretches credulity.

¹ <https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/news/governor-mills-certifies-election-results-questions-1-2-and-3-2021-11-19>

² The first was called an Notice of Inquiry and was docket 2021-00223, and the second was called an RFI at docket 2024-00099

<https://mpuc-cms.maine.gov/CQM.Public.WebUI/Common/CaseMaster.aspx?CaseNumber=2021-00223>

<https://mpuc-cms.maine.gov/CQM.Public.WebUI/Common/CaseMaster.aspx?CaseNumber=2024-00099>

³ RFP planned for March/April 2025, selection of preferred solution September 2026. "2025 Longer-Term Transmission Planning (LTP) RFP," Feb 26 2025, ISO-NE