



## **Testimony of**

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**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology on LD 204, An Act to Reduce the Cost of Electricity by Removing the 100-megawatt Limit on Renewable Resources of Energy**

**Thursday, March 20, 2025**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Dana Doran, and I am the Executive Director of the Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast (PLC). The PLC is a regional educational non-profit organization that represents logging and associated trucking contractors throughout the Northeast, predominately in the state of Maine.

As background, the PLC was created in 1995 to give logging and associated trucking contractors a voice in a rapidly changing forest products industry. As of 2021, logging and trucking contractors in Maine employed over 3,000 people directly and were indirectly responsible for the creation of an additional 2,500 jobs. This employment and the investments that contractors make contributed \$582 million to the state's economy. Our membership, which includes over 200 contractor members in the state of Maine and an additional 125 associate members, is responsible for more than 80% of Maine's annual timber harvest.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify on behalf of our membership in opposition to LD 204, "An Act to Reduce the Cost of Electricity by Removing the 100-megawatt Limit on Renewable Resources of Energy".

LD 204 proposes to remove the 100-megawatt cap for hydroelectric power in the renewable portfolio standard. If this was to happen, we feel that this change would do nothing to lower the cost of energy in the state and would only benefit Canadian companies that are capable of making this level of investment and other energy hungry states south of us. In addition, the bill would create a competitive advantage for other generation sources, which would most likely be the final nail in the coffin for the biomass industry.

Most of our membership has the capacity to produce biomass chips for generators in the state who use wood to create electricity. Those customers include both paper mills as well as stand-alone wood electric facilities and combined heat and power plants. With the loss of the mills in Ashland, Bucksport, Fort Fairfield, Jay, Lincoln, Madison, Millinocket, and Old Town the biomass and low-grade wood markets have been significantly diminished. Loggers are often

forced to leave limbs, tops, and other byproducts that would have otherwise been profitable, in the woods. The margins for logging contractors are currently razor thin and if biomass markets are depleted any more than they already are, logging companies will be forced to go out of business.

Wood is renewable, it is cultivated locally in Maine, and it has a significant economic impact on our state, more so than any other source of energy we have. From the landowners who cultivate it, to the foresters that oversee it, to the loggers who harvest and process it, to the truckers who deliver it, to the generation facilities that utilize it, and citizens who benefit from the energy it provides; wood energy impacts are limitless, and should be enhanced, rather than being negatively impacted by bad policy.

The PLC has an extensive history of opposition to legislation aiming to eliminate the 100 megawatt cap. LD 204 is no exception, as it would decimate the already struggling wood energy industry as well as the remaining pulp paper mills that rely upon the renewable portfolio standard as a source of revenue.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to provide the opinion of our membership. I urge you to vote ought not to pass on LD 204.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.