



Advancing the Clean Energy Future

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Acadia Center Testimony before the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology in support of L.D. 1270, *An Act to Establish the Department of Energy Resources*

Dear Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology,

Acadia Center is a non-profit research and advocacy organization committed to advancing the clean energy future. Acadia Center's work is characterized by reliable information, comprehensive advocacy, and collaborative, innovative problem-solving. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of L.D. 1270, *An Act to Establish the Department of Energy Resources*.

Establishing a Department of Energy Resources will coordinate efforts to reach Maine's clean energy goals

L.D. 1270 creates the Department of Energy Resources ("Department"), eliminates the Governor's Energy Office, and establishes the cabinet level position of Commissioner of Energy Resources, all with the goal of consolidating energy policy and practice in one centralized Department. The Department, in turn, will coordinate with this Committee, the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis, the Revisor's Office and the Efficiency Maine Trust to continue the vital work done by the GEO to make Maine's energy system clean and affordable for all Mainers.

The Department will also oversee state energy policies, programs and development efforts and will be the designated state energy office. The Department's mandates are to assess energy supply and infrastructure needs while working to achieve greenhouse gas reduction targets. The Department will also administer the Distributed Solar and Energy Storage programs and will design and implement competitive solicitations.

While the initial draft of L.D. 1270 will improve Maine's energy planning, some limited amendments will focus and enhance the bill

Acadia Center supports limited amendments to the bill language, as set forth below:

§10303. Departmental responsibilities

The department has responsibilities relating to energy resources, planning, programs and development. The department shall conduct planning, develop and implement policies and establish programs designed to ensure all households, communities and businesses in the State have access to an affordable, reliable, **clean**, and resilient energy supply to meet energy demand and support economic development, **while supporting the achievement of the greenhouse gas reduction obligations and climate policies pursuant to Title 38, section 576-A and section 577, subsection 1 and the renewable energy and clean energy goals in Title 35 section 3210. The department is designated as the energy office for the State.**

...

§10305. Powers and duties of department

Under the supervision of the commissioner, the department shall:

- 1. State energy plan.** Prepare and submit a comprehensive state energy plan to the Governor and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters by January 15th of each odd-numbered year. The state energy plan must:

...

F. Include strategies and actions sufficient to meet Address the association between energy planning and meeting the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals in the state climate action plan pursuant to Title 38, section sections 577 and 576-A;

...

16. Climate policies. Ensure Maine’s energy goals, policies, and plans align with and support the achievement of the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals in the state climate action plan pursuant to Title 38, sections 577 and 576-A;

Further, the provisions in Section A-10 of L.D. 1270 concerning competitive procurements by the Department of Energy Resources can be strengthened by making the following changes:

§10313. Competitive solicitations

4. Evaluation and selection. The department may coordinate with other entities, including, but not limited to, state agencies, the Office of the Public Advocate, expert consultants, transmission and distribution utilities, other New England states and the independent system operator of the New England bulk power system or a successor organization, in the evaluation and selection of proposals under this section. In evaluating a proposal, the department shall determine if the proposal : . . .

E. Avoids, minimizes mitigates or compensates for environmental impacts in line with current state law ~~and impacts on low-income populations; and~~

F. Minimizes impacts to low-income and environmental justice populations; and

G. Adequately demonstrates project viability within a commercially reasonable time frame.

While Acadia Center supports L.D. 1270 in most respects, Acadia Center believes the limited amendments to bill language set forth above better align L.D. 1270 Maine’s stated climate goals and with the energy challenges faced by many Mainers.

Thank you. Acadia Center appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of L.D. 1270.

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