



Testimony of Matthew Marks in Support of LD 1270
“An Act to Establish the Department of Energy Resources”
Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology
April 8, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology, my name is Matt Marks. I am the Principal at Cornerstone Government Affairs and am here today to speak on behalf of the Associated General Contractors of Maine (AGC Maine).

Chartered in 1951, AGC Maine is a statewide commercial construction trade association headquartered in Augusta with members statewide that include contractors, service providers, suppliers, and developers.

AGC Maine supports LD 1270, “An Act to Establish the Department of Energy Resources.” Elevating the Office to a cabinet-level Department will enhance the work of this committee and the governor's energy office. AGC Maine has long held the position that energy development in Maine would benefit from the change proposed in this bill. Maine is an outlier in this regard, with more than 40 states, including our New England neighbors, having cabinet-level offices for energy. AGC Maine has experienced the positive outcome of working with other cabinet-level agencies and the interaction between policy at the Committees, discussions at the Department, and feedback from the Governor’s office.

The department's structure is likely to evolve, and ongoing discussions will strengthen the ability to meet the goals set by this Committee. We believe there is value in adding an engineering position, perhaps power engineering, to the new Department of Energy staff. Today, the office has invested more resources into planning, research, and partner education that directly benefit and impact the market. We also believe elevating this to a department will enhance relationships and opportunities with peers, particularly in New England, but throughout the country.

AGC Maine looks forward to learning more about the proposed procurement authority. We understand that the Energy Office will present additional details for consideration. This model can be successful, but we know that some may have concerns about the process, oversight, and decision-making for procurement. We believe it could be like the process utilized for the transportation work plan published by MaineDOT, where the Committee provides guidance through policy and funding, and the engineering and planning department prepares the necessary three-year plan that is presented to the Committee and the public.

We understand that timing for this transition might be challenging when considering the additional costs associated with this transition. But given that the electricity demand is expected to rise 30% in the next ten years, primarily driven by the transition to heat pumps, it’s essential that the work this Committee does for planning can be delivered by an agency with the tools and authority to accomplish those tasks.

I want to thank the members for listening to my testimony, and I’m happy to answer any questions.