

Testimony of Ashley Luszczki
Before the Joint Standing Committees on Energy, Utilities and Technology
Neither for nor Against L.D. 1868, An Act to Establish the Maine Generation Authority
May 6, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Ashley Luszczki. I am here on behalf of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, representing a network of 5,000+ small to large businesses. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony neither for nor against L.D. 1868, An Act to Establish the Maine Generation Authority.

The Maine Chamber believes the state's transition to a clean energy future be carried out in a way that is affordable, reliable, and competitive for all consumers – including the commercial and industrial users who drive job creation and economic activity.

L.D. 1868 proposes a structured, biennial competitive solicitation process, managed by the Governor's Energy Office, to procure renewable and clean energy resources. While we appreciate the direction, the Chamber offers the following considerations:

First, we believe there should be a clear cap on the amount of energy that can be procured in any given solicitation. Guardrails are essential to prevent procurements that present significant risk in the scale of the contract and ultimately protect ratepayers, and ensure that energy markets remain competitive.

We also believe it is important that procurements be technology-neutral and of the least cost. Should the committee move forward with this legislation, we would urge you to amend Section 8, subsection D (1) to explicitly require that proposals be selected based on "least cost" to ratepayers. This language provides more clarity and stronger ratepayer protection than the broader and more subjective term "cost-effective."

Recognizing that there are multiple energy procurement bills under consideration this session, we would encourage the committee to consolidate these proposals into a single legislative vehicle. We believe L.D. 1270 is best positioned to serve as that framework.

L.D. 1868 raises important questions about the future of energy procurement in Maine. As you weigh these options, we encourage you to maintain a focus on affordability, reliability, and technology-neutral competitive procurements. It's important that Maine's business community – including those who provide energy and those who rely on it – are able to grow and compete in the global economy.