

Testimony of Andrew Kittredge
in Opposition to LD 838
An Act to Establish the Maine Clean Energy Authority
Public Hearing – January 20, 2026

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology:

My name is Andrew Kittredge, I live in Yarmouth and am the President of CPM Constructors. CPM Constructors is a family-owned general contractor employing more than 100 people across Maine. CPM Constructors work is focused around bridge, pile driving, railroad, historic rehabilitation, and marine construction projects. I am writing in opposition to LD 838.

I support Maine's clean energy goals and recognize the need for thoughtful investment in our energy and transmission infrastructure. However, I believe this bill creates a new public authority with sweeping powers that are unnecessary, insufficiently constrained, and likely to increase—not reduce—long-term costs and risks for Maine ratepayers while failing to truly support Maine's workforce.

LD 838 attempts to solve a real problem with a deeply flawed governance, financing, and workforce framework.

1. Creation of a Powerful Quasi-Public Entity with Limited Accountability

LD 838 establishes the Maine Clean Energy Authority as an entity that is explicitly not a state agency, not subject to administrative direction, yet vested with extraordinary powers including eminent domain, unlimited bonding authority, and control over statewide transmission corridors.

While the bill includes a board and audit provisions, these safeguards are insufficient given the Authority's scope. Unlike existing agencies such as the Public Utilities Commission or Governor's Energy Office, this Authority would operate outside traditional checks and balances while making decisions that have long-term financial and land-use consequences for the entire state.

2. Unlimited Bonding Authority Creates Significant Financial Risk

The bill allows the Authority to issue an unlimited amount of revenue and municipal bonds with no statutory cap and no requirement for legislative approval or voter authorization.

Although these bonds are described as “revenue bonds,” history shows that when large infrastructure projects fail to meet projections, pressure inevitably shifts to ratepayers or the State to absorb the risk. The lack of explicit limits or legislative checkpoints exposes Maine residents to potentially significant long-term financial liabilities.

3. The Bill Claims to Support Maine Labor—but Provides No Enforcement Mechanism

While LD 838 repeatedly states an intent to create high-quality jobs for Maine residents and references labor standards, the bill contains no enforceable requirement that Maine workers actually be used on these projects.

There is no:

- Maine-residency hiring requirement
- Minimum percentage of Maine-based workforce
- Local hiring preference enforcement mechanism
- Penalty for contractors that rely predominantly on out-of-state labor

As written, the bill promises Maine jobs without guaranteeing them.

4. Labor Provisions Risk Importing Out-of-State Union Labor at the Expense of Maine Workers

The bill mandates labor frameworks that assume a workforce composition that does not reflect Maine’s construction industry reality. Maine has a limited number of unionized construction workers, particularly in specialized transmission and energy infrastructure trades.

By requiring labor agreements and union-aligned structures without simultaneously building or protecting Maine’s in-state workforce capacity, the bill unintentionally incentivizes large, out-of-state union contractors to enter Maine and staff projects with out-of-state union employees.

This outcome:

- Marginalizes Maine-based contractors
- Limits opportunities for Maine workers—union and non-union alike
- Exports payroll dollars out of state
- Undermines the stated goal of growing Maine’s workforce

Supporting unions should not come at the cost of displacing Maine workers with imported labor. If the intent is to grow Maine’s clean energy workforce, that goal must be backed by enforceable, realistic provisions—not assumptions.

5. Duplication of Existing Institutions

Maine already has multiple entities responsible for energy planning, transmission review, and ratepayer protection, including the Public Utilities Commission, Governor's Energy Office, Efficiency Maine Trust, and ISO-New England processes.

LD 838 adds another layer rather than strengthening existing institutions, increasing the risk of regulatory conflict, inefficiency, and unclear accountability.

Conclusion

LD 838 creates a powerful, lightly constrained authority with broad financial, and workforce implications. Despite its stated goals, the bill fails to ensure that Maine workers actually benefit and risks increasing costs while importing out-of-state labor.

If Maine is going to invest billions in clean energy infrastructure, those investments must:

- Protect ratepayers
- Strengthen—not sideline—Maine's existing workforce

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 838.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Kittredge

Yarmouth, Maine