



Committee on Environment & Natural Resources
% Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

January 21, 2026

RE: LD 2037, An Act to Update the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Allowances

Dear Sen. Tepler, Rep. Doudera, and Members of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Anthony Erwin and I am Maine Audubon's Policy Advocate. Since 1843, Maine Audubon has worked to conserve Maine wildlife and wildlife habitat by engaging people in education, conservation, and action. On behalf of Maine Audubon and our 30,000 members, supporters, and volunteers we thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 2037, *An Act to Update the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Allowances*.

Maine's ecosystems are the lifeblood of our state. They provide critical habitat for wildlife, support recreational and commercial industries, and define the character of our communities. However, these natural systems are at risk due to the continued burning of fossil fuels. Rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and increasingly frequent extreme weather events due to changes in climate are negatively altering the habitat and behaviors of countless species that are vital to our state.

Tackling climate change and conserving wildlife are complex challenges – both of which require embracing a myriad of innovative strategies to be adequately addressed. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is one of those strategies. RGGI is a collaborative effort between 10 eastern states to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants by capping emissions. Power plants are able to purchase emissions allowances and member states can use those proceeds to reinvest into their states. Since 2005, RGGI member states have reduced power plant emissions by 50% and have raised over \$6 billion in sales.¹ By decreasing emissions, we can slow the rate of climate change. Even slowing that rate by a small percentage will lessen the impacts on wildlife and ecosystems. In addition to capping emissions, RGGI auction funds are used to fund projects that further reduce emissions, such as increasing efficiency of heating products and investing in programs such as community-based renewable energy projects. So far, Maine has received more than \$246 million and in 2024 alone, \$12.6 million went to Efficiency Maine initiatives. By doing so, Maine is continuing to do its part in protecting the environment.

¹ RGGI Intro Factsheet,
https://www.rggi.org/sites/default/files/Uploads/Fact%20Sheets/RGGI_Intro_Factsheet.pdf

It is essential that Maine continues to be a part of this great initiative and LD 2037 will not only keep Maine a contributing member of RGGI but also keep RGGI on track to continue to deliver critical emissions reductions.

Protecting wildlife means protecting the habitats they depend on, and that includes addressing all threats to the natural world including carbon dioxide emissions. By continuing to embrace initiatives like RGGI, we allow ourselves to be more creative in protecting wildlife. Because of this, **Maine Audubon urges the committee to support LD 2037**. Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to a more sustainable Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Anthony Erwin", is displayed within a light gray rectangular box.

Anthony Erwin
Policy Advocate