

Paul McCarrier
Town of Monroe, Planning Board
LD 2174

Dear Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Paul T. McCarrier, and I serve as the elected Chair of the Planning Board in Monroe, Maine. I am writing to express my strong opposition to LD 2174, An Act to Replace the Maine Waterway Development and Conservation Act with the Maine Renewable Energy and Associated Transmission Development and Conservation Act.

As the chair of our local planning board, I must oppose this bill because it undermines and removes essential local control over land use and development decisions in our communities. Monroe, like many Maine towns, relies on our planning board to carefully review and regulate projects that affect our environment, economy, and quality of life. By centralizing authority for renewable energy and transmission projects at the state level, LD 2174 would strip away the ability of local boards to address unique community concerns, potentially leading to developments that do not align with our local needs or values.

Local control is enshrined in the Maine Constitution under Article VIII, Part Second, which establishes municipal home rule. Specifically, Section 1 grants municipalities the power to alter and amend their charters on matters that are local and municipal in character, as long as they are not prohibited by the Constitution or general laws. This provision empowers towns like Monroe to govern our own affairs, ensuring that decisions about land use, zoning, and development remain in the hands of those who know their communities best. It reflects Maine's longstanding commitment to decentralized governance, where state intervention is limited to procedural oversight, allowing for self-determination and adaptability to local conditions.

I urge the committee to respect this constitutional principle of local control by voting OUGHT NOT TO PASS on LD 2174. Preserving municipal authority is crucial to maintaining the character and autonomy of Maine's towns.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Paul T. McCarrier
Chair, Monroe Planning Board