

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

Citizens Against Residential Mining Activity (CARMA) opposes 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.” LD 2174 unnecessarily carves out an exception to the home rule provision in the Maine Constitution, a defining right of Maine municipalities. The right of cities and towns to establish controls stricter than the State allows the municipalities to make sure that development happens safely and in accord with their Comprehensive Plans. Legislative contemplation of overriding home rule is only done in cases of true emergencies. The Emergency Preamble of LD 2174 does not present a true emergency. The Emergency Preamble includes the dubious implication that LD 2174 will bring Maine electricity prices down, thereby increasing economic vitality. It also notes that the State has ambitious decarbonization goals, that easier permitting will allow energy infrastructure companies to be financially viable here, and that new businesses development can create new jobs. The combination of these claims does not illustrate an emergency requiring this legislation as “immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety.”

Thank you for your thoughtful evaluation of this bill in the context of our State Constitution’s home rule provision.

Margaret Stuart
Secretary
Citizens Against Residential Mining Activity