

February 26, 2026

Scott Hallowell, CEO  
Eastern Maine Electric Cooperative, Inc.

**THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCING AFFAIRS  
&  
THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY**

**“An Act Making Unified Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027”**

**L.D. 2212**

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs (AFA) as well as members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology (EUT): My name is Scott Hallowell, and I am the CEO of Eastern Maine Electric Cooperative (EMEC). I submit this letter in support of the Department of Energy Resources’ biennial budget proposal to leverage significant federal funds to expand the critical work of the Maine Grid Resilience Grant Program.

Maine’s aging electric grid infrastructure faces significant pressure from severe storms. As a heavily forested, rural state, Maine’s electricity distribution lines have a high probability of damage from falling trees during wind or ice storms. As a result, Maine experiences more frequent and longer duration power outages than most other states. The 2023 and 2024 winter storms devastated communities across the state, including by inflicting significant damage to the electric grid and imposing significant new recovery costs for customers.

The Maine Department of Energy Resources’ Grid Resilience Grant Program has been critical for our community by helping to save ratepayer dollars and investing in crucial reliability and resilience projects across the state, which will help strengthen the state’s resilience and reduce costs over the long term.

EMEC is a rural consumer-owned electric utility that serves portions of Washington, Penobscot, and Aroostook counties. EMEC serves approximately 13,200 consumers in a 3,000 square mile service area, with approximately 1,750 miles of distribution lines. The long distribution lines are susceptible to outages from trees, wind, snow and ice. Improvements to the electric system are continually occurring. The cost of the improvements can be financially challenging, particularly due to the low consumer density.

We have been fortunate to have been selected by the Department of Energy Resources as a subgrantee of federal Grid Resilience Formula Grant Program dollars to the state.

The grant will provide funding to go towards a project that will rebuild approximately ten miles of distribution line with new larger wire. In addition to strengthening this section of line, the project

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will greatly increase the ability to back feed areas from different substations in emergency situations. This increased ability could limit the length of outages for consumers.

Providing these additional funds to the Maine Grid Resilience Grant Program will enable more communities across the state to benefit from a more resilient and reliable electric grid while saving ratepayer funds over the long term.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in support of these important funds. If there are any questions about the grant to date, we would be happy to provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Scott M. Hallowell  
CEO