



CENTRAL MAINE POWER

Kathleen Newman, Director of Government Affairs and Community Relations

LD 952 Resolve, To Create a 21st-Century Electric Grid

April 13, 2023

Testifying: Neither for nor against

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology (“EUT”), my name is Kathleen Newman, presenting testimony neither for nor against LD 952 Resolve, To Create a 21st-Century Electric Grid.

This Resolve directs the Governor’s Energy Office to hire third-party consultants to design a proposal for a distribution system operator (DSO) in Maine that would be charged with overseeing integrated system planning for all electric grids in Maine, providing grid operations, market administration, and facilitation of power system planning.

CMP’s primary aim is to cost-effectively position the grid to meet the demands of the future and we are working diligently to meet those demands. Storms of greater severity and frequency requiring more grid flexibility, planning and managing for more solar generation, battery storage, beneficial electrification and demand response type resources, and bringing on greater amounts of intermittent renewable resources - all of these scenarios require proactive planning to understand and meet the challenges ahead. They will require strategic investment that will be costly to customers but will also be highly beneficial as we move to the future.

In general, CMP supports the concept of working together with all interested parties on how to best plan for the future and believes a study such as that contemplated in Section 1 of this resolve, if conducted with significant utility involvement, could be of value.

CMP is actively engaged in the ongoing grid planning exercise at the Commission¹, required by the Governor’s “utility accountability” legislation² passed last session. The Commission is hearing from stakeholders now and will issue an Order later this year directing utilities to make a grid planning filing consistent with the findings in the Docket. We support a comprehensive plan for the future because we believe such an effort will more likely lead to cost-effective solutions to addressing the new challenges, but caution that costs and benefits of creating a DSO will be extremely difficult to quantify.

Docket No. 2022-00322, Priorities for Grid Plan Filings

² Public Law 2021, Chapter 702

The Commission's process already underway will be comprehensive. If the additional effort contemplated in this bill goes forward, we would encourage an amendment to assure that the work already underway is not wasted by having the two processes dovetail. We look forward to participating in any such discussions.

Thank you for your consideration.