



# CENTRAL MAINE POWER

January 11, 2024

LD 589: Resolve, Directing the Public Utilities Commission to Ensure That the Maine Electric Grid Provides Additional Benefits to Maine Ratepayers

Testifying: In Opposition

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Kathleen Newman, Vice President of Government Affairs for Central Maine Power Company, presenting testimony in opposition to the sponsor's amendment to LD 589, Resolve, Directing the Public Utilities Commission to Ensure That the Maine Electric Grid Provides Additional Benefits to Maine Ratepayers.

Although CMP opposes the passage of this piece of legislation, we support a robust stakeholder process facilitated by the PUC that will provide input on grid investments in support of Maine's statutory climate and energy goals. Such a process is currently taking place in PUC Docket No. 2022-00322; this process implements Title 35-A, section 3147, which requires large investor-owned utilities to undertake an integrated grid planning process and adopt a grid plan for PUC approval.

Section 3147, which was enacted as part of Governor Mills' "utility accountability" legislation, requires large IOUs to file a "grid plan that will assist in the cost-effective transition to a clean, affordable and reliable electric grid." The grid plan must be a "10-year integrated grid plan developed . . . to improve system reliability and resiliency and enable the cost-effective achievement of the [State's] greenhouse gas reduction obligations and climate policies." The grid plan must be supported by (and this information must be made available to interested parties): *forecasts of projected load, including forecasts of end-use electrification, energy efficiency and distributed energy resources; baseline energy supply data and assessments, including planned generation retirements, new generation that is planned or needed, and energy storage installations; analysis of hosting capacity, including locational benefits of distributed energy resources and areas of existing or potential system congestion; analysis of available and emerging technologies necessary to enable load management and flexibility; an assessment of the environmental, equity and environmental justice impacts of grid plans; and an identification of cost-effective near-term grid investments and operations needed to achieve the priorities identified through the required stakeholder process* (emphasis added).

Pursuant to the law, the PUC opened the grid planning docket and it has provided a forum for stakeholders, technical experts, and the Commission to identify priorities, assumptions, goals, methods, and tools for developing the required grid plans. In fact, today the Commission is hosting a stakeholder workshop to establish consensus on a stakeholder engagement process during the 18-month grid planning process, and tomorrow the Commission is hosting a stakeholder workshop to identify priorities for grid plan filings. To date, the Commission has hosted stakeholder workshops on environmental, equity, and environmental justice impacts; forecasting and scenario planning issues; hosting capacity maps; and solutions evaluation issues.

The process being undertaken within this docket includes consideration of exactly the kinds of grid enhancing technologies that Section 1 of the proposed amendment seeks to investigate, as well as a

rigorous process for establishing load growth assumptions that Section 2 of the proposed amendment seeks to study. The grid enhancing technologies described in the sponsor's amendment to LD 589 are all within the scope of the ongoing PUC proceeding, and whether those technologies are best suited for the "cost-effective transmission to a clean, affordable and reliable electric grid" is part of the broader objective of that proceeding. A simultaneous, separate directive to study only those technologies would likely divert resources from the grid planning proceeding and would duplicate those efforts.

Aside from the formal grid planning effort underway at the Commission, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) recently issued Order 881, designed to enhance the efficiency of transmission service and improve transparency of transmission line ratings. It required transmission line providers to implement ambient-adjusted line ratings by 2025 and opened a federal docket to study requiring dynamic line ratings around the country.

In addition, the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (aka Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) also included up to \$14 billion for states and utilities to pilot grid enhancing technologies. A few examples of CMP's active efforts to implement grid enhancing technologies and seek federal funding to support those efforts include the following:

- Employing dynamic line ratings to fully utilize offshore wind;
- Adopting dynamic line ratings and advanced conductors to prepare the distribution grid for DERs and enhance grid resilience;
- Ongoing evaluation of grid needs to reconductor transmission and distribution lines to improve efficiency rather than acquiring new rights of way;
- Current collaboration with the GEO to apply for a DOE grant to initiate a dynamic line rating pilot project on two transmission lines;
- Active deployment of SCADA-controlled devices across the system for remote operation and control of the T&D system; and,
- Current collaboration with the GEO to apply for a DOE grant to initiate Active Network Management (ANM) for advanced power flow control, which includes hardware and software components deployed in a coordinated fashion to manage system constraints and send dispatch instructions to DERs, as needed, to maintain the electric system within desired operating parameters.

An Avangrid sister company in New York has an active DLR project which went online in November, 2023 - we are happy to provide additional information to the company about that experience. And, as you know, CMP recently received a federal grant of \$30M to deploy enhanced automated protection schemes in Maine's disadvantaged communities, which includes deploying SCADA devices, utilization of automatic grid restoration and sequential reclosing schemes.

CMP appreciates the opportunity for technical study, stakeholder input, and consensus building that the ongoing PUC proceeding provides, and we would be happy to work with the sponsor and the Committee to review the progress made within that docket. While the grid plan is still being developed, we encourage the Committee let the process adopted in LD 1959 play out further before introducing separate requirements already under consideration. For that reason, CMP respectfully opposes passage of LD 589.

Thank you for your consideration.