

Letter regarding LD1963, from affected home owners Sam and Liz in Etna

My name is Sam, and this is Liz, my wife. We live in Etna, and our property and home is directly in the path of the proposed transmission line that LS Power has been attempting to get procurement for from the Maine PUC. Liz and I were never informed of this plan to cut our home off from the rest of our property until a kind neighbor knocked on our door to tell us. When I asked LS Power how they could do this, their representative told me that once they received the power of eminent domain through the PUC, then they would pay us for the land that lay under the proposed 150 foot tall transmission line, but not for the entire value of the property or the total loss of property value after construction. This means that they would compensate us a few thousand dollars for the acreage cut down and built upon, while our only home could lose over half of its value according to some studies, forcing my wife and I to owe our bank for 30 years with nothing to show for it. When I contacted the governor's office, I was directed to a young lady at the energy department who told me that she was concerned about climate change, so lines like this have to happen. I then learned that almost half of the power that would run down this line would supply Massachusetts with energy while sawing a 140 mile pathway through rural Maine, devastating tax payer's properties while destroying habitat and wildlife. My wife and I and everyone that owns a home or farm that this line is built upon would have to suffer for it.

This property is financially all that we have, and everything that we have worked for. It's a small two bedroom one bath house sitting on a beautiful woodlot that has required a lot of love and hard work to maintain that took us the better part of a decade of work to save for. I work brutally long 12 hour shifts as a nurse to afford paying our mortgage, and take care of residents of the larger Bangor area who are having the absolute worst days of their lives. I worked six 12 hour shifts in a row through Christmas due to short staffing at our hospital, and on Christmas eve, I spent my time attempting to bring a patient back to life by doing chest compressions surrounded by this patient's crying family. This is what I do for the people of this state.

The only thing that allows me to recover after my shifts is coming home to Liz and our small town and being in the woods on our land that we paid for, a place of refuge and beauty. These woods provide us with food through hunting, they provide us with heat through the winter. They provide the locals with trails to snowmobile on. They provide the thousands of animals near us with a home. A high tension transmission line is not a simple power line. It will be 150 feet tall at least, it will make a loud buzzing sound in high humidity, it will require continuous maintenance and heavy machinery in our backyard to prevent tree growth, it will destroy habitat for wildlife, and it will be all that we see when we look outside. It will cut our property value in half, it will cost us everything we have worked for and put us in the red for decades. It will take from me the only place where I can recharge after caring for the people of this state. And that is only us. Only two people, out of the thousands of hardworking rural Mainers who will be cast aside and punished by this potential project. I beg you all, take our story into consideration. We are not just data points who can be sacrificed for the supposedly greater good, a greater good that potentially is intended to be half paid for by another state.

