

January 11, 2024

Re: LD 1963: An Act Regarding the Future of Renewable Energy Transmission in Northern Maine

Good Afternoon Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and the distinguished members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee,

My name is Mary Anderson and I live in Unity, Maine.

I am here in opposition to LD 1963.

My family owns a farm in Unity raising Scottish Highland cattle, which would have been in jeopardy had the Aroostook Renewable Gateway project proceeded. The proposed corridor would have cut through the middle of our pasture and hay fields.

I think Maine is in a unique position right now right where we have the opportunity to be leaders in the Renewable Energy movement. I think if we take the time and do things with forward thinking, we can run corridors underground, minimizing impact to the environment, similar to New Hampshire who has successfully developed a plan with both legislative and population backing. This will be a win-win for the state, environment, and rate-payers. While underground lines may be a little pricier up front, over the long term they would be less expensive to maintain, nor would we have to worry about as many widespread power outages like we have recently seen in our state.

Another concern is the negative effect on land property values and rights. Most property values decrease when a high voltage power line passes through its borders. It doesn't seem fair for landowners to lose property rights of their land, while still having to pay yearly taxes on that land. I am also concerned with receiving fair compensation when land is taken without landowner approval.

Lastly, if the goal is Green Energy, it seems like there must be a better way to achieve this than by clearing a swath 150' wide by 150 miles long through forests, fields and farms. I think there is a better way to achieve Renewable Energy goals that could preserve everything that Maine has to offer.

Thank you for your time,

Mary Anderson