



January 11, 2024

The Hon. Mark Lawrence, Co-chair  
The Hon. Stanley Paige Zeigler, Jr., Co-chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology  
State House  
Augusta, Maine 04330

**Re: Testimony in Support of L.D. 1963, “An Act Regarding the Future of Renewable Energy Transmission in Northern Maine”**

Dear Sen. Lawrence, Rep. Zeigler, and members of the EUT Committee:

On behalf of Longroad Energy (Longroad), I am writing in support of L.D. 1963, “An Act Regarding the Future of Renewable Energy Transmission in Northern Maine,” sponsored by Senate President Jackson.

Longroad develops and operates wind and solar energy projects in markets across the United States. In our Scarborough office, we employ a dozen people including Maine Maritime Academy graduates and U.S. military veterans who operate hundreds of renewable energy power plants across the country from a control room staffed around-the-clock. The Longroad team has been developing renewable energy projects in Maine for over 15 years, and during that time, we have invested over a billion dollars in the process of developing approximately 700 megawatts (MW) of clean energy here in the state.

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) issued a request for proposals (RFP) in November 2021 pursuant to the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development statute that was developed by the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee during the 130<sup>th</sup> Legislature. Longroad submitted a bid for its King Pine Wind project in the energy supply portion of that RFP process in May 2022, which was selected by the PUC in October 2022. In response to encouragement by the PUC, Longroad worked to engage Massachusetts in this process, which led to the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources deciding to partner with Maine in late 2022. Subsequently, the PUC determined that a 60/40 split between Maine and Massachusetts was in the public interest and approved term sheets with Longroad for King Pine Wind and with LS Power for a transmission line.

As you are aware, last month the PUC terminated this procurement process and indicated an intent to initiate a new procurement to implement the Northern Maine Renewable Energy

Development statute. Coupled with the PUC's stated plans to review the procurement process and solicit stakeholder feedback, LD 1963 provides an opportunity to make improvements to the process.

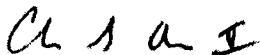
Longroad has reviewed the sponsor's amendment to LD 1963 and believes it would make useful adjustments to the Northern Maine program. In particular, we support providing more flexibility to the PUC to determine the type and size of transmission infrastructure needed to interconnect 1,200 megawatts of renewable generation to the New England grid. There are potentially viable alternatives that could be less expensive than the double-circuit 345 kilovolt line currently required in the law.

The sponsor's amendment would also confirm that Maine should seek to collaborate with other states or entities on this procurement. To its credit, the PUC did so in the first procurement, and it is prudent to include in the statute prior to a second process. Collaborating with other states in the region to share the costs and benefits of the Northern Maine program would benefit all involved. A new procurement is an opportunity to improve this cooperation.

Longroad remains committed to the development of King Pine Wind, which will produce electricity at a cost below the market rate for power and unlock significant economic benefits for Northern Maine. Furthermore, the project is important to achieving the state's climate goals, reducing Maine's reliance on expensive and volatile fossil fuels, and directly interconnecting Aroostook County to the U.S. electric grid.

Thanks for the opportunity to share our views on this bill.

Sincerely,



Chad Allen  
Director of Development  
Longroad Energy Holdings, LLC