



**TRAFTON
PROPERTIES LLC**

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January 22, 2024

Senator Mark Lawrence, Senate Chair
Representative S. Paige Zeigler, House Chair
Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
100 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Senator Lawrence and Representative Zeigler,

In regards to LD 2077, An Act Regarding Customer Costs and the Environmental and Health Effects of Natural Gas, I express my concern as to the undesired economic impacts this measure would yield if enacted. I speak on behalf of Trafton Properties, located on Trafton Road in Waterville. Trafton Properties owns and manages a 226,000 square foot industrial building at this location. This once vacant industrial building is now fully occupied and within its walls employment now totals 220. This success is due in part to the opportunities created when natural gas was brought to our doorstep.

The largest employer in our building is Shyft Group, manufacturing aluminum truck bodies for multiple applications under the brand name Duramag. A key component of their manufacturing process involves powder coating, a process that requires a heat intensity that natural gas provides. Prior to securing service with natural gas, our building and tenants relied on propane. Propane could not meet the performance requirements for powder coating. As a result, Shyft faced the prospect of transporting assemblies for powder coating off site and then transporting those assemblies back to Waterville. With natural gas, Shyft located three powder coating operations in Waterville to avoid these transportation costs and realize more reliable production schedules. Furthermore, Waterville gained nine new jobs and this competitive advantage improved the prospects for the entire workforce.

The Bill, LD 2077, appears to be indifferent to the special characteristics of natural gas and its application in manufacturing as I have described. Were this bill in effect back when we were relying on propane, the economic opportunity offered by natural gas would have been forfeited.

Thank you for taking these thoughts into consideration.

Sincerely,

Harry Kojoian
Managing Member
Trafton Properties LLC