

## Testimony on LD2205

Position: For

*Senator Lawrence, Representative Ziegler, esteem members of the EUT committee, and Representative Cyrway*

My Name is Tom Bolen and I chair the Albion Transmission Line committee.

Thank you for allowing me to speak today regarding LD2205

A comprehensive feasibility study which requires a focused; technical, ecological, environmental and social review at what is good for the State of Maine and her people before we plow forward implementing a Clean Energy build strategy is a novel idea, right? Not at all, its common sense, which has been seriously missing in the States hurried quest to meet its self-generated climate goals. What's happened here in the State with the failed Aroostook Renewable Gateway (ARG) and the NECEC line would never happen in a large corporation. I know firsthand having worked in various Industries and the public utility space, a project of this magnitude would never make it to the C suite without an extremely well thought out strategy and numerous engineering studies that show the various impacts and viability of the project. Both a short term and long term strategy would be rigorously reviewed, investigated and discussed. A long view would look at market trends and how new technologies and methods could be utilized to capitalize and corner the market for long term sustainability of the Company. In the public sector, here in Maine that does not appear to be the preferred strategy but rather one of political expediency regardless of technology trends, socio-economic impacts or ecological impacts.

This bill as written does not necessarily hit the mark but I and others do believe it can be worked with some revisions to be more in tune with technology trends in the transmission industry such as the use of buried HVDC. This approach delivers much in terms of its ability to co-locate in existing transmission corridors or other corridors such as highway right-of-ways, rail right-of-ways, etc... This is possible because of its small footprint, 5ft wide vs. 150ft wide aerial transmission. Is this technology more expensive? Yes it is but not as expensive as the Utility companies would have you believe. The Utility companies exaggerated costs have been debunked by a study performed by NextGen Highways out of Seattle, Washington for the State of Minnesota DOT in 2022. This study is well worth the read. When co-location and the simultaneous burying of broadband during the construction phase is considered the cost-benefit ratio increases considerably making a project much more palatable. Also the call out in this bill for a "project team" is an excellent opportunity for qualified citizens such as Professional Engineers

who work in this transmission space, Farmers who understand and appreciate the ecological impacts of misguided approaches and of course other citizens who understand and appreciate the negative socio-economic impact of a hurried approach. Unfortunately this bill does not make this a requirement of the PUC selected its project team. This is a non-starter! Qualified citizens with working backgrounds in these professions/areas need to be part of the team and at the project table.

This is a great opportunity for you, our legislators to get this right for the long-term benefit Maine.

Thank You,

Thomas E. Bolen

Albion Transmission Committee; Chair