



## CENTRAL MAINE POWER

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Honorable Chairs and Members of the Committee,

I am here today expressing my strong support for L.D. 629 and asking you for your support to restore the State's annual investment in the Maine Development Foundation (MDF). The state's funding is structured as a matching agreement, which is premised on private contributions and investments first. Each year, companies and individuals in Maine express their support for MDF financially, contributing more than half a million dollars each year. The Avangrid Foundation alone has contributed more than \$275,000 in the past 5 years. I'm asking for your support for the state to resume matching the \$500,000 investment.

You have already been informed by previous speakers about the numerous initiatives MDF is involved in, such as FOR Maine, SeaMaine, MaineSpark, and Adult Promise. While I won't reiterate all the details, I would like to share my personal experience with MDF and explain why L.D. 629 is so important to me. I am a firm believer in MDF's mission to unite people across the state and within our communities to improve the state for all of us. I am honored to be serving my second year as the Chair of the Board of the Maine Development Foundation and fourth year on the Board.

I'm also a proud member of MDF's Leadership Maine program, from the Casco class, and I'd like to talk about why Leadership Maine is special. Each year, the program guides 30 or so local leaders through the leadership course and literally across the state of Maine. What sets MDF apart is that this isn't a generic leadership training teaching techniques and buzz words. It's an ever-evolving experience that educates on current,

relevant issues in the state, on local economies and on emerging issues, and then explores ways to address them. This dynamic approach is only possible because of MDF's deep roots in Maine, and their extensive knowledge and non-partisan relationships built over more than 30 years. I can't say enough about Leadership Maine and why it's different, and that's just one small facet of what MDF does so very well. Every year, I collaborate with CMP's leadership team to identify one or two of emerging leaders. We invest in our people and, by extension, in MDF by sending them through MDF's leadership programs. They're that impactful.

In my roles as a Board member and now as Chair, I have witnessed firsthand the dedication of the hardworking team at MDF, led by Yellow. They are a small but formidable group that tirelessly works across political and geographical divides to grow our economy, develop our workforce and future leaders, support downtown revitalization efforts, deliver workforce training, support entrepreneurs in expanding forestry and ocean economies, revitalize mill towns, and train former mill workers for new careers. What other organization can achieve all this and more?

If this isn't already persuasive, consider that MDF accomplishes all this incredible work while simultaneously fundraising for financial support. They do this with remarkable success, as countless private companies across Maine step up to support MDF and invest in our state's future through grants, donations, partnerships, and participation in MDF's training courses. I mentioned earlier, companies across Maine collectively invest more than half a million dollars in MDF each year, and the Avangrid Foundation is one of those companies. Today I'm asking the Committee for your support for MDF and their critical work on behalf of everyone who values our way of life in Maine.

Thank you, and I'm happy to answer any questions.