



An Avangrid company

March 11, 2025

Testimony on behalf of Central Maine Power Company in Support of

LD 810: An Act Regarding the Approval of Transmission Lines

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology, my name is Kathleen Newman, Vice President of Government Affairs for Central Maine Power Company, submitting testimony in support of LD 810: An Act Regarding the Approval of Transmission Lines.

This bill would deem that a high-impact electric transmission line has achieved the legislative approval requirement at Title 35-A, section 3132(6-C) when that transmission line is proposed at the direction of a law already passed by the Legislature. This is a sensible approach to avoid what is otherwise a double legislative approval requirement, however CMP supports repeal of the legislative approval requirement for all high-impact transmission lines. This new requirement for legislative approval, potentially before a corridor is even secured, is an unnecessary hurdle to development of needed transmission buildout to meet the state's clean energy goals, potentially delaying projects and leading to increased costs.

The extensive requirements currently in place with multiple points of public participation afforded by the MPUC's current certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN) process – not to mention the many additional agency permitting requirements that the public can be involved in – provide more than sufficient public oversight for transmission projects.

A petition for approval under the existing CPCN process requires a public hearing, with notice requirements to all municipal officers of the municipalities in which the line is to be located. It must contain "a description of the effect of the proposed transmission line on public health and safety and scenic, historic, recreational and environmental values and of the proximity of the proposed transmission line to inhabited dwellings" as well as "justification for adoption of the route selected, including comparison with alternative routes that are environmentally, technically and economically practical" and "a description of the need for the proposed transmission line."

In the MPUC's CPCN review of transmission projects facts are developed and applied to objective legal criteria to protect our environment, our economy, and the public good.

The existing legislative approval requirement instead removes impartial permitting decisions undertaken by MPUC and agency experts, and allows legislators to make a thumbs up or thumbs down decision without having been party to any rigorous review

We believe the requirement should be repealed outright, but short of that, this bill takes a step in the right direction by affirming that once a high impact transmission line has been proposed by a state agency under legislative direction, it is deemed to have received majority legislative approval to move forward. We support LD 810 as a reasonable streamlining measure that will remove an unnecessary delay to needed transmission line construction and encourage you to vote Ought to Pass.

Thank you for your consideration.