

Testimony of Ashley Luszczki
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
In Support of L.D. 342, An Act to Include Nuclear Power in
the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard
March 13, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Ashley Luszczki. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on L.D. 342, An Act to Include Nuclear Power in the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard. I am providing testimony in support of this legislation on behalf of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, which represents small to large businesses across the state.

The bill proposes to include nuclear power, specifically that constructed after January 1, 2025, as a qualifying resource under Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). This idea is not unique to Maine, other states have been exploring and have incorporated nuclear as an eligible generation resource in their RPS or Clean Energy Standard¹ as well. New England has two existing nuclear power plants and their continued operation will be critical for all states in New England to meet our greenhouse gas targets. While it is critical that we expand new renewable resources, we cannot simply expect that these existing clean energy resources will continue to operate without recognizing their clean energy benefits.

Furthermore, as electricity demand is anticipated to grow, the region will need to be open-minded to all clean energy resources if we really will be the climate leader that is envisioned by Maine's climate laws. It should be noted that nuclear has had research and development support from both the Biden and Trump Administration and Congress has supported nuclear development recently through the passage of the ADVANCE Act (Acceleration Deployment of Versatile, Advanced Nuclear for Clean Energy Act)² of 2024 to promote advanced nuclear permitting and deployment.

The Chamber believes that including a diverse mix of energy resources in Maine's RPS or in a Clean Energy Standard seems appropriate. By increasing the number of qualifying resources, this legislation could help to ensure that utilities are able to meet Maine's RPS or new CES. Currently, Maine has an 80 percent requirement by 2030 and 100 percent by 2050. The Maine Chamber does believe that nuclear should have a role in our long-term energy strategy and our

¹ National Conference of State Legislatures. (2025, March 7). *2024 legislative energy trends*. <https://www.ncsl.org/energy/2024-legislative-energy-trends>

² U.S. Congress. (2024). *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024* (Public Law No. 118-67). U.S. Government Publishing Office. <https://www.congress.gov/118/plaws/publ67/PLAW-118publ67.pdf>

environmental attribute markets (RPS and CES) should reflect this potential. Finally, Maine should always be open to new investments to create new jobs, attract new industries, and help grow the economy.

Thank you for your consideration.