

**Testimony of Ashley Luszczki**  
**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology**  
**In Support of L.D.343, An Act to Direct the Public Utilities Commission to Seek**  
**Information Bids Regarding Small Modular Reactors in the State**  
**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.343, An Act to Direct the Public Utilities Commission to Seek Information Bids Regarding Small Modular Reactors in the State. 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.

Maine has a long history of producing energy from clean resources including biomass, hydropower and wind. As Maine continues its transition to a cleaner grid to meet climate goals – in addition to energy needs – it is prudent the state explore and consider all viable pathways. There has been a focus on wind and solar in recent years, but these renewable source's are intermittent. Wind and solar, without battery storage, is solely dependent on conditions of our natural environment – wind direction and speed, levels of sun exposure and time of day. While the state should pursue integration of battery storage to harness that power, Maine should also continue to look at other clean energy technologies. Small modular reactors (SMRs), which can quickly adjust their output, could compliment other renewable sources by providing reliable power to the grid at times – such as during colds snaps - when we rely on imported liquified natural gas and oil to maintain reliability.

A quick look at the news will point you to the manufacturing facility closures Maine has experienced in recent years – the Androscoggin Mill in Jay, the iconic B&M Baked Beans, Dragon Cement, ON Semiconductor. These businesses provided economic opportunities for Mainers and added to the strength of Maine's economy. As the state seeks opportunities to attract manufacturing back to Maine, the investments and work being done to develop SMRs in states like Tennessee is noticeable. With significant investments in nuclear innovation<sup>1</sup>, states including Idaho and Tennessee are quickly attracting this new sector.

As has been mentioned many times by the Chamber, two key areas of concern for businesses are affordability and predictability. The baseload power provided by SMRs has promise as does the

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<sup>1</sup> Tennessee Governor's Office. (2025, March 13). *2025 State of the State Address*. Tennessee Governor's Office. <https://www.tn.gov/governor/sots/2025-state-of-the-state-address>

ability for these projects to be scaled up overtime, but gaining a greater understanding of the full cost and benefits is critically important. We believe that L.D. 343, which would require the Public Utilities Commission to issue annual RFIs for SMR bids, is a necessary first step as Maine considers incorporating various forms of energy into the grid and will help the state to make informed decisions regarding viable paths forward.

We appreciate your consideration and urge the committee to support L.D. 343.