



Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
% Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

March 20, 2025

Re: Public Hearing, LD 204 (An Act to Reduce the Cost of Electricity by Removing the 100-megawatt Limit on Renewable Resources of Energy), LD 638 (An Act to Create Equal Opportunity Access to Clean Energy by Removing the 100- megawatt Limit on Clean Energy Sources) and LD 371 (An Act to Expand Hydroelectric Development by Removing the 100-megawatt Cap)

Dear Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony in opposition to LDs 204, 638, and 371, on behalf of the Maine Renewable Energy Association (MREA). MREA is a not-for-profit association of renewable energy producers, suppliers of goods and services to those producers, and other supporters of the industry. Our member companies include wind, solar, hydropower, biomass, and tidal energy generators and developers of such projects, as well as companies that provide services to those producers, such as environmental engineers, electricians, and general contractors.

The LDs before the Committee today seek to remove the 100-megawatt maximum capacity limit for a source of electrical generation to qualify as a renewable resource for the purposes of meeting the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). For many years, MREA has opposed and the Maine Legislature has rejected removing the so-called "100-megawatt cap" for four primary reasons:

1. It runs counter to the long-standing intent of Maine's RPS, which is to incent in-state (or at least, in-region) clean energy development to help diversify our energy mix, encourage in-state investment, and create new jobs;
2. Today's Maine RPS has supported renewable development and operation resulting in over \$100 million in direct investment, approximately \$900 million in operations and maintenance spending, and over 1,000 full-time equivalent jobs yielding over \$1 billion in worker income between 2008 and 2022;

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3. Existing statute places reasonable geographic limitations on eligible resources and specifically allows renewable energy that is delivered into the New England bulk power system, regardless of where it is generated, to qualify for the RPS. This includes resources owned and operated by the Canadian government, including HydroQuebec and New Brunswick Power. Notably, according to HydroQuebec's 2022 annual report, HydroQuebec currently has 16 hydro generating stations rated less than 100-megawatts totaling 680-megawatts, for which they have not sought Maine RPS certification; and
4. When restructuring occurred in the late 1990s, the largest in-state renewable energy generator was Wyman hydro, followed by Harris. This is still true today for Maine-based hydropower assets, with Wyman at 85-megawatts and Harris at 82-megawatts. This Committee has adjusted eligibility standards to accommodate Maine-based clean energy projects in excess of 100-megawatts, for example Kibby Wind at 132-megawatts.

Lifting the "100-megawatt cap" may lead to oversupplying the RPS markets with Canadian-government owned hydropower, which could crash the price of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), the sale of which is an income source for in-state hydropower and other in-state renewables. Despite claims to the contrary, if large-scale hydropower is made eligible for Maine's RPS there is no evidence it would supply Maine with lower cost power - and it would certainly discourage investment in Maine-based renewables if private companies are asked to compete with government-owned generation.

Thank you for your consideration of MREA's testimony. We urge the Committee to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on LDs 204, 638, and 371.

Sincerely,



Eliza Donoghue, Esq.
Executive Director