



STATE OF MAINE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Philip L. Bartlett II
CHAIR

Patrick J. Scully
Carolyn C. Gilbert
COMMISSIONERS

Amy Dumeny
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

Testimony of the Maine Public Utilities Commission
Neither For Nor Against

**LD 1251, Resolve, to Reduce the Cost of Energy in Maine and Further Reduce
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Through Energy Contracts**

April 9, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology (Committee), my name is Deirdre Schneider, testifying neither for nor against LD 1251, Resolve, to Reduce the Cost of Energy in Maine and Further Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions Through Energy Contracts on behalf of the Public Utilities Commission (Commission).

LD 1251 requires the Commission to issue a request for information concerning: (1) whether there are any reasonable opportunities for the Commission to explore and consider engaging in the execution of an energy cost reduction contract (ECRC) or a physical energy storage contract (PESC); and (2) the identification of existing and near-term replacement energy sources for natural gas in commercial and industrial uses. It also requires the Commission to contact every gas utility and natural gas pipeline utility in the State and every state or province adjacent to Maine to negotiate favorable terms for one or more ECRC, PESC or other arrangements to reduce the cost of energy in the State and to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

LD 1251 subsection 1

During the 131st Legislature, Public Law 2023, chapter 222 was enacted, and it required the same inquiry as contained in LD 1251. The Commission conducted the required inquiry and submitted a report on February 1, 2024.¹ In relation to subsection 1, paragraph A of LD 1251, in the prior request for information (RFI), except for Cashman-Preload Cryogenics, none of the comments received identified any specific opportunities for the Commission to explore the execution of an ECRC or PESC. A majority of commenters, in response to subsection 1, paragraph B of LD 1251 in the prior RFI, mainly addressed the benefits of renewable natural gas (RNG) and hydrogen generally, although some commenters did speak to these sources as replacement energy sources for natural gas in commercial and industrial settings, especially in harder to electrify industries such as aviation and shipping.

LD 1251 subsection 2

The second part of LD 1251 requires the Commission to contact various stakeholders and adjacent states and provinces regarding opportunities to engage in ECRCs and PESC. The Commission

¹ <https://www.maine.gov/mpuc/sites/maine.gov/mpuc/files/inline-files/P.L.%202023%20ch.%20222-Report.pdf>

regularly engages with other states and stakeholders to determine if there are opportunities to engage in arrangements that would help reduce the cost of energy in the State. In addition, the Commission also monitors FERC proceedings related to interstate natural gas transportation capacity in New England and the Northeast and intervenes or participates in those proceedings when it is in the best interest of ratepayers. 35-A M.R.S. § 1909-A requires a report in any year in which the Commission has intervened and participated in a FERC proceeding.

I would be happy to answer any questions or provide additional information for the work session.