



Testimony in Support of LD 1868
An Act to Advance a Clean Energy Economy by Updating Renewable and Clean Resource
Procurement Laws
May 6, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the committee, my name is Mark Thibodeau and I am the Regional Manager of ReGenerate Energy Holdings, here today to testify in support of LD 1868.

We would like to thank Senator Lawrence and the Governor's Energy Office for bringing this legislation forward. It is extremely meaningful for our facility in Stratton, our employees, vendors, suppliers, and the forest products industry generally.

ReGenerate Energy Holdings owns two standalone biomass energy facilities in Livermore Falls (39 megawatts) and Stratton (48 megawatts), which combined can produce enough baseload and dispatchable renewable electricity to supply upwards of 85,000 homes. These facilities employ 51 people directly, more than 250 indirectly and are important economic engines in these rural communities. They are critical outlets for low value residues in the forest products industry. In the absence of these facilities, sawmills, loggers, landowners, and other forest product manufacturers in Maine would have limited options for residue disposal and would subsequently force this material into Maine landfills or left in the woods to create dry tinder for potential forest fires.

In addition to our renewable electricity generation, ReGenerate is also working diligently in other beneficial spaces including:

- Distribution to Maine farmers of our MOFGA -approved ash as an agricultural fertilizer, the Stratton facility currently serves more than 90 family-owned farms in the region
- Development and exploration of biochar as a PFAS mitigation technology, we successfully commissioned a biochar project at our Livermore Falls facility in February of 2024 and hope to build a similar project at our Stratton facility which will make ReGenerate the largest producer of biochar in the State of Maine.

As evidenced in our reporting to the Public Utilities Commission, these facilities are cost competitive, act as an effective hedge for ratepayers, provide meaningful employment in rural areas, and provide tens of millions of dollars in local economic benefits each year.

Section 26, *Renewable energy procurement; repowering and continued maintenance of existing resources*, **is critical for the future viability of our Stratton facility** as its future hinges on a successful contract award in a competitive procurement. Without a near-term opportunity to competitively bid into a procurement, volatile energy markets will make it difficult for Stratton to continue operations. Losing this facility would be an unfortunate outcome for our employees and the Town of Stratton, our extensive network of suppliers in the forest products industry, and



Maine's climate and cost policy objectives, and it is an outcome that can be avoided.

The procurement proposed in this section is proven. First, much of its construct is born from the 3210-G (existing resources) procurement that the Public Utilities Commission implemented in 2020.

Our Livermore Falls facility was successful in that procurement and has demonstrated both the ability to be a meaningful benefit to ratepayers and a significant local economic benefit. This procurement was especially important for our partners in the forest products industry who depend on our facilities as an outlet for low-value forest residues.

Procuring energy from, and repowering existing renewable facilities affords Maine a certain efficiency toward helping to meet our renewable and climate goals. These facilities are already permitted, built, and financed, and if successfully procured, can provide years of renewable electricity immediately upon contract execution.

Stratton is prepared to submit a cost-effective, competitive bid in response to such an RFP. We would propose two amendments to this section:

- 1) **Section 26, 2- Competitive procurement, A.** This section directs the Public Utilities Commission to procure an amount of energy or renewable energy credits from eligible Class 1A resources that is equal to 2% of electricity sales. We would encourage the committee to increase the size of this procurement to 5% to allow for contracts with multiple existing facilities should their bids demonstrate ratepayer benefits. As written, the size of this procurement could limit the PUC from taking advantage of multiple cost-effective bids.
- 2) **Section 26, 3- Contract terms.** We would encourage the committee to increase the duration of these contracts from 10 years to 20 years. 20 year contracts, which have been the standard and were used in the 3210-G procurement in 2020, result in more competitive electricity prices allowing developers and owners more flexibility with investment and the return on that investment.

For these reasons, we would urge the committee to support this legislation. We would be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the work session. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Mark Thibodeau
Regional Manager
ReGenerate Energy Holdings