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January 22, 2026

Testimony in Opposition: LD 2113, An Act to Align Long-range Grid Strategy with the State Energy Plan and Strengthen Integrated Grid Planning

Greetings Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. My name is Alf Anderson, and I am an Associate State Director for Advocacy and Outreach for AARP Maine. AARP is a non-profit, non-partisan social mission organization with more than 200,000 members across the state. We work on a range of energy issues at the state level. The core principles we approach this work with include affordability, reliability, and accountability.

AARP Maine opposes the proposed LD 2113 because it will result in duplicative integrated grid plans and require additional ratepayer costs to create what this Legislature has already required that the investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities must do. To expend funds that will be paid for by ratepayers so that the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) can duplicate what the utilities have been required to do does not seem necessary. Both Central Maine Power (CMP) and Versant Power have spent several years with extensive public outreach and stakeholder opportunities for input to produce integrated grid plans that reflect this Legislature's mandates in PL 2025, c. 293. Section 2 of that law requires that the grid plans must reflect the following:

Priorities identified; stakeholder input. Beginning November 1, 2022, then every 5 years thereafter, the commission shall initiate a proceeding to identify the priorities to be addressed in a filing by a covered utility regarding a grid plan that will assist in the cost-effective transition to a clean, affordable and reliable electric grid. The commission shall hold technical conferences or stakeholder workshops before the filing to identify priorities, assumptions, goals, methods and tools that will assist the covered utility in developing a grid plan.

The resulting utility grid plans must conform to the priorities identified in Section 2. The Commission issued an Order setting forth those priorities. There is no basis for concluding that competing plans is a reasonable use of scarce and overburdened ratepayer funds.

Furthermore, the mandate in section 6 of this proposed bill to adopt performance based regulatory (PBR) mechanisms does not seem necessary. The PUC has just recently initiated a proceeding (Docket 2025-00354) regarding multi-year rate plans. Rather than the legislature mandating exactly what

should be in PBR mechanisms, it would seem prudent to allow the Commission to identify the proper criteria for inclusion in its upcoming proceeding.

The criteria proposed in section 6 also do not include any assurance that rates and bills will be affordable and that vulnerable customers can afford essential electric service, which should be a priority and be explicitly mentioned, in our view.

Grid plans should not be implemented without consideration of rate and bill impacts, short- and long-term affordability, and whether, for example, increasing rates to achieve the stated “priorities” can be affordable by residential customers.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony. If I can answer any questions or provide any further information, you can reach me at aanderson@aarp.org or 207.330.1147.

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