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## Testimony on

**L.D. 2174, “An Act to Replace the Maine Waterway Development and Conservation Act with the Maine Renewable Energy and Associated Transmission Development and Conservation Act”**

**Presented by  
Representative Paul R. Flynn  
District 63**

Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Wednesday, February 25, 2026

Good afternoon, Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

I am State Representative Paul R. Flynn, and I represent the citizens of District 63, which consists of Albion, Freedom, Unity Township, and a portion of Winslow. It is a pleasure to appear before you today for the purpose of speaking in opposition to L.D. 2174, “*An Act to Replace the Maine Waterway Development and Conservation Act with the Maine Renewable Energy and Associated Transmission Development and Conservation Act.*”

It was approaching three years ago when the people of central Maine were intimately introduced to such terms as HVTL, alternating current, direct current, high voltage, underground, and the King Pine Wind project. Three years ago, Albion residents were invited to a meeting conducted by LS Power to announce the high-voltage transmission line that was being proposed to come through town, linking the New England grid to the proposed King Pine Wind project in Aroostook County.

What was perplexing was that a multi-billion-dollar wind turbine project, one in which would make Maine home to the largest wind turbine project east of the Mississippi River, had been approved by this Legislature in 2020 without a plan to get the power out. What we were able to determine was that there was a plan to get the power out, but no one was told. Subsequently, during one summer afternoon, citizens were gathered at the Besse Building, in Albion, and were told what was going to happen...our land would be forever changed at the altar of renewable energy.

Clearly, when one tells the central Maine community that land was being taken to put in a high-voltage transmission line, there will be reaction from the people. It is important to note that at no time was there expressed opposition to green energy or to renewable projects. In fact, the exact opposite is true. We, in rural areas, embrace clean living, clean energy, and clean water. We make our living off our lands that we

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love. We had committees of very competent electrical engineers, and alternatives and solutions were offered to find common ground.

Within months, there were committees set up within each of the little towns up and down the corridor that were exercising their rights to be involved in the decision-making process. In many respects, we knew we would have to protect ourselves. Many small towns, never having faced anything like this before, did what they needed to do. They established guidelines and put together plans on how to make things work or how to help meet our energy goals without destroying our landscape and our way of life.

Nonetheless, here we are today debating legislation to take away the people's voice. We are debating legislation to diminish the people's ability and desire to live without an ever-encroaching government. We are living in a very cynical time. People have lost faith in government. People have lost faith in us to do the right thing.

We, the Legislature of Maine, have an opportunity right here, right now to give the people back their voice by offering some assurance that they are being heard. The way to accomplish this is by reporting this bill out unanimously *Ought Not to Pass*.

Thank you for your time and consideration.