



*Senator Mark W. Lawrence*  
*3 State House Station*  
*Augusta, ME 04333-0003*  
*(207) 287-1515*

February 10, 2021

**Testimony on LD 9: An Act To Promote Renewable Energy by Authorizing a Power-to-fuel Pilot Program**

Rep. Berry and honorable members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee,

I am Sen. Mark Lawrence, and I represent Senate District 35, which consists of the southern-most part of York County. I am here today to present LD 9, “An Act to Promote Renewable Energy by Authorizing a Power-to-fuel Pilot Program.”

As many of you will recall, last session this committee supported LD 2017, sponsored by Rep. Tina Riley. LD 2017 was working its way towards passage last session when the pandemic unfortunately required us to adjourn. I am pleased to bring the bill back this year with LD 9.

This bill will give Maine the opportunity to be a leader in innovative technology that allows us to maximize the renewable energy we are generating in this state.

As you know, every year Maine curtails hundreds of thousands of kilowatt-hours of renewable energy. That is energy we are generating at times of low demand that simply goes to waste because we do not have proper storage technologies to capture it and reuse it during peak demand times. Our congestion problem, while bad today, is only going to worsen as more and more renewables come online.

As we work to innovate and build a grid for the future, it is essential we keep an eye toward new technologies that allow us to maximize the energy we are producing.

That is exactly what LD 9 intends to do by creating this Power-to-fuel pilot program in Maine.

I will allow others to speak to specifics of power to fuel technology but, in essence, it allows us to convert renewable energy to green hydrogen or other fuels sources. This gives us the ability to take advantage of existing infrastructure, reduce congestion on the grid and make meaningful headway on our efforts to reduce carbon emissions, without requiring large buildouts of

additional electrical transmission. The emission benefit is particularly important as we work to reduce emissions in our heating and transportation sectors. By using the fuel generated by these pilots to provide energy for industry, heat or vehicles, we can have a real climate impact while preserving energy choice.

Developing this small pilot program here in Maine will help ensure that we can measure the impact of these projects for customers, and our grid, while incentivizing significant private investment.

As Rep. Riley told us last year, “Projects like this can be one of the tools we use to ensure a diverse blend of opportunities that speak to the existing needs of Maine’s biggest industries.”

As we continue to embark on our serious efforts to reduce our carbon footprint here in Maine, Power-to-fuel can ultimately create an interface between renewable electricity generation and our roughly billion dollars in existing natural gas infrastructure. This bill is a meaningful step forward in terms of creating an environment that attracts this type of investment and allows Maine to be out in front, as developers begin to think about where to site these projects around New England and other parts of the country.

I will now let the proponents of the legislation discuss the technology of power-to fuel and the specifics of this legislation, but would be pleased to answer any questions that you might have for me.

Thank you.