

Office of Policy and Legal Analysis

Date: November 3, 2021
To: Joint Standing Committee on Energy Utilities and Technology
From: Deirdre Schneider, Legislative Analyst
Re: LD 82, Resolve, To Provide for Participation of the State in the Planning and Negotiations for the Atlantic Loop Energy Project

Overview

This resolve is an emergency that requires the Governor to inform the Prime Minister of Canada and the premiers of the provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Quebec that Maine has a direct interest in all aspect of the Atlantic Loop project.

It requires that the Governor, along with other state agencies and other interested parties designated by the Governor in participating in the planning and negotiations on the Atlantic Loop project to develop and pursue policies consistent with state law, designed to maximize the benefits that all affected parties in the state can obtain from it.

Lastly, it requires the Governor to report at least once every 3 months to this committee on the status and substance of the Maine's involvement in all matters related to the Atlantic Loop project.

The Atlantic Loop project is part of plan to advance renewable energy across 5 provinces and is motivated in part by the Canadian government mandate to retire all coal generation by 2030.

Subsequent to the first work session, the committee sent a letter to the Governor on April 12, 2021, requesting that the Office of the Governor commit to engaging the Atlantic Clean Power Planning Committee in discussions on this project, to use any and all avenues it has at its disposal to participate in those discussions and to provide the committee about any discussions or developments related to this project.

At the last interim meeting the Governor's Energy Office provided the following information.

- An interim report regarding a Clean Power Roadmap for Atlantic Canada was issues in August of 2020. A final report has not been released, but the GEO will continue to monitor the progress of this planning effort.
- Director Burgess presented to the Atlantic Clean Power Planning Committee on April 21, 2021. During the presentation, the GEO outlined the state's climate and clean energy policy goals and requirements, and expressed interest in continuing to find ways to work together with our Canadian neighbors in accomplishing shared goals.
- The co-chairs of the Atlantic Regional Clean Power Planning Committee sent a letter to the GEO on June 9, 2021, expressing their appreciation for the presentation and the opportunity to learn more about the State of Maine's plans to develop clean energy generation in an effort to meet the State's climate goals.

- The GEO has engaged in outreach to a number of Canadian partners and organizations (on this and other issues) including with: Atlantica Center for Energy; Natural Resources Canada (NRCan); Provinces; CONEG; and other developers and utilities.
- GEO Energy Policy Analyst, Melissa Winne, presented at the Maritimes Energy Association Annual Conference: The Power of Collaboration to discuss Maine's clean energy policies related to large-scale energy development as relates to community engagement, economic benefits, and workforce development.