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***Testimony of Sen. Eloise Vitelli supporting
LD 1008, “An Act To Require Joint Use Entities To Establish Permanent Liaisons with All
County Emergency Management Agencies”
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
April 6, 2021***

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, fellow members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee, my name is Eloise Vitelli, and I represent Senate District 23, which includes all of Sagadahoc County and the Town of Dresden in Lincoln County. I am before you today to testify in support of LD 1008, An Act To Require Joint Use Entities To Establish Permanent Liaisons with All County Emergency Management Agencies.

This bill would require joint use entities – which may include phone and internet providers, in addition to public utility providers and other entities – to designate a liaison who can be available to county emergency management agencies (EMAs). When an emergency occurs, be that a statewide nor’easter or a single fallen pole leaving wires on the ground, it is critical that our EMAs are able to get in touch with people who can help address the emergency. Just knowing who to call during these times – and knowing that person is expecting your call – is a critical step in any emergency response plan.

Some EMAs already enjoy these relationships with various utility and other companies. By enshrining this best practice in statute, our EMAs and these joint use entities can work together to ensure the safety of residents and consumers. This bill does not require an additional staff person or investment from these companies, just that one member of their team be prepared and available to work with EMAs when needed.

I believe this bill will benefit all parties – from consumers, to county EMAs, to the entities themselves – and I urge the committee to support this bill. I thank you for your time and I’m happy to answer any questions.