



Testimony of Matt Marks Against LD 1634
An Act To Create the Maine Generation Authority
May 5, 2021 10:00 AM
Joint Standing Energy, Utilities, and Technology

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology. My name is Matt Marks; I am a Scarborough resident representing the Associated General Contractors of Maine.

Creating a Maine-owned generation is a significant policy shift as we approach the final weeks of a completed legislative session. Right now, the growing and vibrant renewable energy market have created so much work that you have existing bills to address the flooded market. That's why it appears unnecessary to create a new quasi-public agency to develop, own and operator generation.

From a public policy standpoint, this proposal and shifting the direct burden for supporting it to the ratepayers should be studied before considering this change. As Maine works towards aggressive renewable energy goals in Maine's climate action plan stopping the current investment and shifting to a model will undoubtedly have an impact on progress.

Over the last few years, Maine has shifted messaging to private investors that we are open to the development of Maine' based generation. It's clear the messaging and accompanying policies attracted significant investment, and with that, thousands of jobs were supported by the design, permitting, and construction of new facilities.

Since Maine deregulated electricity in 2000, they join fourteen states which also offer choices in electricity generation. Undergoing a shift back to state-owned facilities should be carefully considered. In that short time, we've seen significant investments in the renewable energy market. Adopting a new policy will undoubtedly cause a pause of assets. It could not only jeopardize our renewable energy goals it will have a definite impact on a growing construction market.

Right now, solar energy and wind energy jobs are the fastest growing in the market. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics "Employment of PV installers is projected to grow 50.5 percent from 2019 to 2029, much faster than the 3.7-percent growth that is projected for all occupations. Windtechs are also expected to grow very fast (60.7 percent) over the 2019–29 decade." We know that's true in Maine as members are furiously recruiting to meet demand.

We have many questions about implementation, costs, and processes for shifting to a public agency under this plan. We will listen to the proponent's testimony to understand the concept as proposed. It's our initial reaction that this proposal should be tabled to be heard when the public, consumers, developers, and affected parties like

the construction industry can participate in a hearing process where personal interaction is permitting. The conversations associated with this bill will be complex, and the process must include more than virtual hearings.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposal and happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Marks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Matt Marks, AGC Maine