



Testimony of Matt Marks in Support LD 1659
An Act To Create the Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator
Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology
May 13, 2021 10:00 AM

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. My name is Matt Marks; I am a resident of Scarborough. I am here today to testify for this bill on behalf of AGC Maine.

The Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Maine, Chartered in 1951, is headquartered in Augusta and has members statewide. Member companies include contractors, service providers, suppliers, and developers. We are a diverse business organization with companies that are open shop, signatory union contractors, employee-owned firms, and disadvantaged business enterprises all under one roof. Overall Maine has an estimated 4,800 construction firms where 95% are considered small businesses with fewer than 20 people.

To meet statutory goals for renewable energy and the recommendations of the Maine Climate Council outlined in the report, “Maine Can’t Wait” innovative ideas are required. One of the primary constraints is the upfront costs associated with the installation of clean energy technology. While the payback might demonstrate concrete benefits for both the environment and a developer, improvements included in the initial construction can be limited due to financial constraints. Providing the opportunity to include building solutions that will have both benefits expedites the state’s goal.

The Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator as outlined in the bill provides a financial tool available to the developer to meet the costs associated with clean energy upgrades, vehicle charging stations, micro-grids, vehicle fleet conversions and climate resilient infrastructure projects. The financing model provides great flexibility through the Efficiency Maine Trust to use creative partnerships leveraging private investment too.

With aggressive climate goals in both transportation and building construction, it’s important to offer financial programs that will assist the development of new projects. A good deal of Maine’s efforts have been focused on improving the condition of the oldest structures in Maine. As our state increases the demands through our statewide building codes, it also benefits from providing tools to meet and exceed those goals.

Maine's construction industry continues to grow in renewable energy construction. Supporting the continued investment in clean energy jobs will increase the long-term sustainability of skilled trades. Construction has rebounded since the 2010 great recession, but the increase in retiring workers continues to outpace the new generation of constructors. It's vitally important that a blend of public and private work continue so we can recruit, educate, and build that workforce.

AGC Maine encourages the Committee to provide financial tools outlined in this proposal. I am happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew Marks".

Matt Marks, AGC Maine