

Anne Butterfield
Scarborough

Good evening Senator Lawrence and Representative Berry and members of the EUT Committee:

I am Anne Bartol Butterfield and live in Scarborough, where my husband and I moved permanently just last year, from Boulder CO. I offer my remarks today speaking for myself, as a volunteer.

I am a 5th generation Prouts Neck summer resident, descended also from 2 longtime Maine families including 23rd Gov of Maine, William Crosby.

So I am proud to testify on this topic that I understand with a rare angle due to having lived in Boulder where I was an opinion columnist for seven years focusing on energy policy.

I avidly supported Boulder's muni effort and also support LD 1708. I support transforming the 19th C utility sector by bringing big challenges to the difficult corporate entities that profit by it.

My values stem also from being the daughter of a corporate lawyer who wrote the employee stock ownership program for Matlack Trucking in the 1960's. From him I learned there are good companies and bad companies, and improvement can come to a company thru ownership by employees and other affected stakeholders. So I believe that where monopolies intrude in a free market, they either need to provide a NONessential service like Facebook - or they need to be heavily directed by the people affected. If a monopoly exists, it needs to be directed by the people paying the bills not the people raking the profits.

Now to Boulder's battle w/ Xcel that led to a mixed result - including outstanding success.

After 10 years, Boulder voted to pause its municipalization effort with a franchise with XcelEnergy in an agreement with 6 off ramps for Boulder to resume separation where they left off, if wanted. Certainly not a wasted effort, Boulder did the impossible by moving this titan, vertically-integrated coal-burning utility to adopt carbon reductions of 80 percent by 2030 across eight states and to get to zero emissions by 2050, with agreement to retire all CO coal plants by 2040. Two authoritative voices credited Boulder's push for prodding Xcel this way - One was Ben Fowke the CEO of Xcel and another was Frances Kocilja, a recent CO utility commissioner.

Boulder's process was complicated by lack of a set map on how to proceed plus difficult borders of the proposed service territory. I believe Maine's quest is streamlined in many ways compared to Boulder's. I suspect Maine's economic imperative to act boldly is more stark than Boulder's was. Energy poverty needs to be relieved by getting more folks off of oil heat and on to heat pumps possibly financed through on-bill financing.

An IOU can be resourceful with legal attacks. Still, in the end, Xcel sought settlement. I think that shows Boulder's case was strong. In the end Boulder's muni effort cost 15% less than one single year's worth of net profits that Xcel extracted out of the city.

I think LD 1708's plan to have the people of Maine vote on this is paramount. Return power to the people on this huge part of Maine's economy and energy future.

If the committee would like more particular information from me, please ask. I can provide written testimony replying to your questions.

Sincerely Submitted,

Anne Bartol Butterfield