

Lasse Lau
Rockport

I submitted an old version by mistake. Please update my written testimony to the one below. Thank you!

Senator Mark Lawrence, Representative Seth Berry, and honored members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee, I thank you for your work in considering LD #1708.

My name is Lasse Lau. I am a new resident of the beautiful Rockport Village. We relocated here about six months ago from northwestern Connecticut. I am an award-winning documentary filmmaker starting a new life here in Maine with my husband Larry and our dog Wilbur.

We bought an old house from 1860 on Church Street and are currently living in the next-door apartment while the house is being renovated. We are using a local contractor that has worked in the Rockport/Camden area for more than 30 years. He has been very frank with us from the beginning that we need to invest in a 10-15,000-dollar generator for the likelihood of power outages, something that seemed a little dramatic to us just six months ago.

This winter alone, we already experienced two minor power outages. Something that we only experienced in Connecticut twice in 16 years. We also started noticing all the generators tucked away behind the properties in our new neighborhood. We are served by CMP.

I travel extensively for my work and now worry about potential power outages and pipes freezing or rancid food left behind in my fridge when not at home. There is currently a backorder on generators for about nine months. The costs of freezing pipes alone are something that, from my experience, can reach thousands of dollars--not to mention insurance costs.

Without wanting to sound too harsh, I have only experienced private citizens having to operate their own power sources in developing countries. I have seen and experienced how physically and emotionally taxing it is when you can't rely on your power company to supply you with the electricity you need for your water pump, fridge, heat pump, stove, lights, internet, etc. Electricity is a basic need for all humans in contemporary society.

I support this bill because I want a reliable utility company that reinvests profit into maintaining and servicing the power grid instead of gambling with our safety. I don't want to worry about my safety or the safety of my neighbors, who cannot afford the prohibitive cost of a generator to stay warm during winter.

Not having a reliable power source hinders people's daily lives, limits our workforce free movement and productivity, and harms our businesses. If we want to stay competitive and attract a talented workforce to our state, we need to take this seriously and start investing in our infrastructure as a pathway to invest in our collective future.

Therefore, I strongly support LD #1708. I believe the cost of not fixing our infrastructure is far higher than the cost of fixing it.

Thank you for taking my testimony into consideration. I am available if you have any questions.