

May 16th, 2023

Senator Mark Lawrence, Senate Chair
Representative Paige Zeigler, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology
100 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

RE: MSCC Testimony neither for nor against L.D. 1850, An Act Relating to Energy Storage and the State's Energy Goals

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee:

My name is Ben Lucas, I live in Portland, and I represent the Maine State Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is the voice of Maine business, speaking for approximately 5,000 Maine businesses of all sizes throughout the State. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce is testifying neither for nor against L.D. 1850. We appreciate the sponsor, Senator Vitelli, for bringing this legislation forward and her continued leadership on the conversation of energy storage.

The Chamber believes energy storage is an important policy conversation. Over the recent years, we have seen these policy conversations evolve at a federal level. Here in Maine, we have had great leadership from both of our U.S Senators on this issue. Back in 2020, Senator Collins led a bipartisan effort in the Senate to pass a new law to accelerate the development of next generation energy storage. Just recently, Senator King urged the Biden Administration to invest in a broad variety of energy storage technologies. This is why we are happy to see L.D. 1850 introduced and we appreciate the efforts of the Maine Legislature to follow the work of our Congressional Delegation to make progress here in Maine.

At a high level, the Chamber supports energy storage because it will help our efforts to combat climate change as it will help integrate more renewable energy which will help reduce emissions. We believe it offers good promise for our businesses and will help the state's ability to cost-effectively meet our clean energy goals. For example, if prices are high on a certain day and we have wind, solar, or hydro stored – there may be an opportunity to use those resources at a cheaper price. The Chamber has confidence in both our utilities and the Maine PUC to establish a process for this first procurement of energy storage. In the future, we believe that there will be enough demand for both utility owned storage and non-utility owned storage.

We believe that L.D. 1850 is a generally a positive step forward as we work to develop more energy storage.

Sincerely,
Benjamin R. Lucas
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Maine State Chamber of Commerce
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