

T o w n o f C a r a t u n k

Office of Selectmen

P O B o x 1 8 0 C a r a t u n k , M a i n e 0 4 9 2 5

2 0 7 . 6 7 2 . 3 0 3 0

c a r a t u n k s e l e c t m e n @ m y f a i r p o i n t . n e t

Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Committee Clerk: VLA@legislature.maine.gov

Re: **LD 194**, An Act to Prohibit Contributions, Expenditures and Participation by Foreign Government-owned Entities To Influence Referenda, and **LD 479**, An Act to Ban Foreign Campaign Contributions and Expenditures in Maine Elections, and **LD 641**, An Act to Ban Contributions, Expenditures and Participation by Foreign Nationals To Influence Referenda

Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo and distinguished members of the Committee:

Foreign involvement in U.S. elections and policymaking constitutes a threat to our sovereignty and to our democratic process. Foreign entities should not be allowed to influence the minds of US voters and elected officials through false advertising and lobbying serving the interests of these foreign entities. This infiltration purposed to intercept the perceptions of our elected representatives, legislators, and voters should NOT be tolerated in any capacity.

Federal law prohibits contributions, donations, expenditures and disbursements solicited, directed, received or made directly or indirectly by or from foreign nationals in connection with any election- federal, state or local. Please act to close this loophole which Hydro-Quebec exploited and protect Maine's citizens and our election integrity.

Hydro-Quebec is owned solely by the Canadian province of Quebec and is only interested in securing profits, even at the expense of Maine, Canadian and tribal citizens. This large, foreign government/corporation's ability to flood Maine with false advertising in order to change the perceptions of Maine voters is revolting and injurious at best. Allowing foreign intervention in our democratic elections is anti-American, serving the interest and bank accounts of non-citizens at the expense of US citizens.

As an intervenor during the three state agency (PUC, DEP, LUPC) proceedings of NECEC, I know firsthand that Hydro-Quebec refused to participate in these proceedings which would require testifying and answering questions under oath. Only after the proceedings closed, Hydro-Quebec engaged with the media to distribute its pro-corridor propaganda - all of which was refuted by expert witnesses under oath. For example, the Massachusetts Attorney General testified that HQ did not have the capacity to provide new (incremental) clean energy to the NECEC, was not required by the contract to even provide clean power, and that the energy provided would/could come from resource swapping from fossil sources. However, HQ's tens of millions of dollars bought false clean energy advertisements, taking direct aim at Maine, are misleading the public into supporting its multi-billion dollar profit scheme. All are aware that media ads are not required to be true, nor do the media outlets verify the claims; thus, HQ has only come forward in the media, attempting to brainwash Maine voters by defrauding truth in order to profit a foreign corporation and a provincial government.

Additionally, not only is such foreign intervention illegal in Canada, but HQ has a history of ethics violations.

We must reject foreign influence in any type of election, including the involvement of foreign corporations with U.S. headquarters or other avenues of funding. I respectfully request that you support LD 194, LD 479, and LD 641 to extend those protections to Maine referenda, protecting Maine citizens and safeguarding Maine's democratic process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elizabeth Caruso
First Selectman