

**To:** Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee

**From:** Linda Woods, Waterville

**Date:** March 12, 2021

**Re:** Support of 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

I am writing in support of 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. Passing this law would close an existing loophole and bring Maine law in line with a federal one. Even though Hydro-Quebec now lists its headquarters as Hartford, CT, the treasurer and principal officer are located in Montreal.

Hydro Quebec has spent over \$23 million on advertising trying to influence Maine people that New England Clean Energy Connect is a good idea for Maine. Recently, Hydro Quebec paid for a half-page advertisement “Behold the Mighty Rain Drop” in *The Central Maine Morning Sentinel*. A similar ad is currently running on TV. While the ad does not clearly state the power from the proposed Corridor will be for Maine residents, the implication is clearly there. Only a discerning reader/viewer would note the absence of specifics. “Well, just a half-inch of rainfall in northern Quebec can produce enough energy to power every home in Maine for six months.” Scientifically this may, in fact, be true; however, this is blatant green-washing paid for by a foreign company trying to influence Maine voters. Hydro-Quebec has never provided verifiable evidence about their environmental claims regarding New England Clean Energy Connect.

A foreign entity should be prevented from trying to influence a Maine election whether that be for a candidate or a referendum. Allowing foreign entities to continue to fund advertising will set a dangerous precedent for future referendums. I encourage you to vote in support of LD 194 and LD 479 and keep foreign influence out of Maine. Thank you.