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**Testimony In Opposition to
LD 376, “An Act to Repeal the Law Regarding the Northern Maine Renewable
Energy Development Program”**

February 14, 2023

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology,

My name is William Harwood and I am the Public Advocate, here today to testify in opposition to LD 376, “An Act to Repeal the Law Regarding the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program.”

On February 3, 2023, the PUC issued an order in Docket No. 2021-00369, “Request for Proposals for Renewable Energy Generation and Transmission Projects Pursuant to the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program.” In this order, the Commission conditionally approved terms from Longroad Energy and LS Power proposing 60 percent of projects will be funded by ratepayers and that these terms were within the public interest.

The OPA submitted comments in this docket in which we state, “(the) OPA has consistently advocated for the need to aggressively and cost effectively make a clean energy transition to help mitigate the harmful effects on Maine residents due to price swings caused by our overreliance on fossil fuels. We believe one way to accomplish that goal is through competitive bidding in order to bring more grid-scale renewables online.” Turning these bids into long-term contracts will benefit Maine ratepayers for years to come. We have attached the Office’s full comments to this testimony.

The OPA believes the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program will lower rates and will continue to lower rates as more off-takers are added to the transmission line. The OPA cannot support a repeal of this program.



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Thank you for your time, attention, and consideration of this testimony. The Office of the Public Advocate looks forward to working with the Committee on LD 376 and will be available for the work session to assist the Committee in its consideration of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

William S. Harwood
Public Advocate