



State of Maine
Office of the Public Advocate
112 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0112
(207) 624-3687 (voice) 711 (TTY)
www.maine.gov/meopa

Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

William S. Harwood
PUBLIC ADVOCATE

Testimony in Support of
LD 589, “Resolve, Directing the Public Utilities Commission to Ensure That the
Maine Electric Grid Provides Additional Benefits to Maine Ratepayer”
January 11, 2024

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

My name is William Harwood, here today as Public Advocate, to testify in support of the sponsor’s amendment to LD 589, “Resolve, Directing the Public Utilities Commission to Ensure That the Maine Electric Grid Provides Additional Benefits to Maine Ratepayer.” The OPA supports the Grid Enhancing Technologies (GET) investigation proposed in Section 1. The phrase “Grid Enhancing Technologies” includes hardware and software solutions that improve the performance of the existing grid. More efficient use of Maine’s existing electricity assets may lower the cost of preparing the grid for greater loads and distributed energy resources. When strategically integrated, GETs allow utilities to defer more costly infrastructure investments and prioritize construction where it is most needed. [A recent study](#) by the Department of Energy (DOE) found GETs strategies are significantly less costly and help to move the grid toward greater capacity.

Regarding Section 1 (3), the NWA Coordinator does evaluate GETs such as Dynamic Line Rating¹ and Power Flow Controllers² during the NWA analysis. An additional statutory review isn’t needed.

The OPA also supports the beneficial load study proposed in Section 2, specifically the emphasis on incorporating “the existing excess electrical capacity within the grid whose

¹ Dynamic Line Rating is a way to increase transmission line thermal rating beyond the static rating by monitoring the weather and line temperature in real time.

² The Power Flow Controller device acts as two voltage sources helping to balance overloaded lines and underused corridors within the transmission network. It can provide both reactive power compensation/voltage control and active power load flow control in one unit.



State of Maine
Office of the Public Advocate
112 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0112
(207) 624-3687 (voice) 711 (TTY)
www.maine.gov/meopa

Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

William S. Harwood
PUBLIC ADVOCATE

use is consistent with beneficial electrification and, where feasible, avoids the need for significant investment or expense for additional grid infrastructure.” Continued focus on reducing peak demand or shifting demand to lower cost time periods remains a significant means of moderating ratepayer costs as the state transitions to greater electric loads to meet state goals for greenhouse gas reduction.

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 589 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