

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 1796

H.P. 1275

House of Representatives, May 29, 2019

**Resolve, To Study Transmission Grid Reliability and Rate Stability
in Northern Maine**

Reference to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative STEWART of Presque Isle.
Cosponsored by President JACKSON of Aroostook and
Representatives: DeVEAU of Caribou, JOHANSEN of Monticello, MARTIN of Eagle Lake,
MARTIN of Sinclair, McCREA of Fort Fairfield, SWALLOW of Houlton, WHITE of
Washburn, Senator: CARPENTER of Aroostook.

1 **Sec. 1. Convene stakeholder group. Resolved:** That the Governor's Energy
2 Office shall convene a stakeholder group to identify and develop strategies to address the
3 transmission grid reliability and electric rate stability for the northern Maine service
4 territory. The stakeholder group must consist of representatives of:

- 5 1. The Governor's Energy Office;
- 6 2. The Public Utilities Commission;
- 7 3. The Office of the Public Advocate;
- 8 4. The Northern Maine Independent System Administrator;
- 9 5. A municipal government in northern Maine;
- 10 6. A large industrial electric utility customer located in northern Maine;
- 11 7. A trade association representing businesses located in northern Maine;
- 12 8. A trade association representing the forest products industry;
- 13 9. An investor-owned transmission and distribution utility serving northern Maine;
- 14 10. Two different consumer-owned transmission and distribution utilities located in
15 northern Maine; and
- 16 11. An energy generator located in northern Maine.

17 **Sec. 2. Review and recommendations. Resolved:** That, in its review of
18 transmission grid reliability and electric rate stability for the northern Maine service
19 territory, the stakeholder group convened pursuant to section 1 shall, at minimum,
20 address and develop recommendations concerning:

- 21 1. The continued need to assess reliability in the northern Maine service territory;
- 22 2. The shutdown of biomass plants in the region, such as those in Fort Fairfield and
23 Ashland, that have in the past been essential to addressing reliability concerns;
- 24 3. The region's fuel security, competitive supply and rate volatility resulting from its
25 reliance on generation resources in the region; and
- 26 4. Opportunities for transmission and nontransmission alternatives to address the
27 current and projected reliability and rate stability needs of the region.

28 **Sec. 3. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than December 4, 2019, the stakeholder
29 group shall submit to the Governor's Energy Office a report establishing the scope and
30 priority of transmission grid reliability and electric rate stability issues for the northern
31 Maine service territory, together with recommendations. The report must address the
32 concerns identified in section 2 and recommend strategies that respond to those issues,
33 including any recommended changes to the law or to the rules of the Public Utilities

1 Commission. The Governor's Energy Office shall submit the report, together with any
2 proposed implementing legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities
3 and Technology. Upon receipt and review of the report, the joint standing committee
4 may report out a bill related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 129th
5 Legislature.

6

SUMMARY

7 This resolve directs the Governor's Energy Office to convene a stakeholder group to
8 identify and develop strategies to address the transmission grid reliability and electric rate
9 stability for the northern Maine service territory. The Governor's Energy Office is
10 directed to submit a report that includes its findings, together with any proposed
11 implementing legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and
12 Technology, which is authorized to report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the
13 129th Legislature.