

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2020

Legislative Document

No. 2017

H.P. 1438

House of Representatives, January 14, 2020

**An Act To Promote Renewable Energy Resources by Establishing
an Energy-to-Gas Pilot Project**

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

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

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative RILEY of Jay.

Cosponsored by Senator WOODSOME of York and

Representatives: BERRY of Bowdoinham, CAIAZZO of Scarborough, Senator: VITELLI of Sagadahoc.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §103, sub-§2, ¶E** is enacted to read:

3 E. The commission shall oversee a pilot project to convert excess renewable energy
4 to methane gas and store the converted methane for future use.

5 **Sec. 2. Renewable energy to methane gas pilot project.** The Public Utilities
6 Commission shall develop and oversee, pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title
7 35-A, section 103, subsection 2, paragraph E, a pilot project to convert excess renewable
8 energy to methane gas and to store the converted methane gas for future use.

9 **1. Definitions.** As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the
10 following terms have the following meanings.

11 A. "Commission" means the Public Utilities Commission.

12 B. "Energy-to-gas facility" means a facility at which renewable energy is converted
13 to methane gas and stored.

14 C. "Pilot project" means the energy-to-gas pilot project established pursuant to this
15 section.

16 D. "Renewable energy" means electricity generated from renewable and efficient
17 resources, including, but not limited to, wind, solar and tidal power.

18 **2. Pilot project requirements.** The commission, no later than January 1, 2021, shall
19 establish the pilot project with the following requirements:

20 A. The construction of a maximum of 3 energy-to-gas facilities, each up to 10
21 megawatts in production capacity;

22 B. Siting requirements for the energy-to-gas facilities that maximize the use and
23 availability of renewable energy; and

24 C. An expiration date for the pilot project of December 31, 2026.

25 **3. One-time exemption from transmission and distribution charges.** Renewable
26 energy transmitted to an energy-to-gas facility for conversion to methane gas pursuant to
27 the pilot project is exempt from transmission and distribution charges for delivery of
28 electric power, including volumetric, demand and standby charges.

29 **4. Report.** The commission, by November 1, 2021, shall submit a report to the joint
30 standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy and utility matters
31 regarding the progress made on establishing the pilot project, including the number of
32 energy-to-gas facilities constructed and the amount of renewable energy converted into
33 methane gas by those energy-to-gas facilities. The joint standing committee may report
34 out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature based on the report,
35 including legislation extending or making permanent the pilot project.

1

SUMMARY

2 This bill requires the Public Utilities Commission to develop and oversee a pilot
3 project for the conversion of excess renewable energy generated from sources such as
4 wind, solar or tidal power into methane gas and the storage of the converted methane gas
5 for future use. Up to 3 energy-to-gas facilities, each up to 10 megawatts in production
6 capacity, may be established. The transmission of the renewable energy to an energy-to-
7 gas facility is exempt from all transmission and distribution charges. The commission is
8 required to establish the pilot project no later than January 1, 2021; the pilot project
9 expires December 31, 2026.