

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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L.D. 2077

Date: 3/29/24 MAJORITY

(Filing No. H-890)

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**ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY**

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**STATE OF MAINE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
131ST LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 1336, L.D. 2077, "An Act Regarding Customer Costs and the Environmental and Health Effects of Natural Gas"

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

**'Resolve, to Study the Role of Natural Gas in an Equitable Clean Energy Transition for Maine'**

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the title and inserting the following:

**'PART A**

**Sec. A-1. Public Utilities Commission inquiry. Resolved:** That, by October 1, 2024, the Public Utilities Commission shall conduct an inquiry that includes, but is not limited to, an evaluation of investment planning undertaken by gas utilities and consideration of a framework for commission oversight of future investments made by gas utilities. In conducting its inquiry, the commission shall consider:

- 1. The requirements of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 103-A;
- 2. The policy of beneficial electrification under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, chapter 38; and
- 3. The goals established by the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3210, subsection 1-A, the state energy plan under Title 2, section 9, subsection 3, paragraph C and the climate action plan adopted pursuant to Title 38, section 577.

**Sec. A-2. Report. Resolved:** That, by December 1, 2025, the Public Utilities Commission shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utility matters that includes an overview of the inquiry required pursuant to section 1 of this Part, a summary of any actions the commission plans to take as well as any recommendations for legislation. The committee may report out a bill related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

**PART B**

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

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**Sec. B-1. Governor's Energy Office evaluation. Resolved:** That the Governor's Energy Office shall, in consultation with the Public Utilities Commission, review and evaluate:

1. The current use of natural gas in meeting the existing energy needs of the residential, commercial, institutional, industrial and power generation sectors in the State;

2. The role of natural gas in ensuring the energy security of manufacturers and large commercial customers and in providing employment for residents of the State;

3. Policy and regulatory activities concerning natural gas utilities in other states and concerning the role of existing gas infrastructure in supporting the transition to a low-carbon future;

4. New and emerging technologies for the production, transportation, delivery and storage of natural gas; and

5. New and emerging technologies that may enable alternative cost-effective uses of existing natural gas infrastructure consistent with the requirements of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 38, section 576-A and the climate action plan adopted pursuant to Title 38, section 577, including, but not limited to, renewable natural gas, clean hydrogen and district geothermal technologies.

The Governor's Energy Office shall encourage interested stakeholders to submit relevant information to inform the evaluation required under this section.

**Sec. B-2. Report. Resolved:** That, by December 1, 2025, the Governor's Energy Office shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utility matters that includes an overview of the evaluation required pursuant to section 1 of this Part and any recommendations for legislation. The committee may report out a bill related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

**PART C**

**Sec. C-1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission to Study the Establishment of a Just and Equitable Transition for Maine's Workforce Impacted by State Energy Policies and Goals, referred to in this Part as "the commission," is established.

**Sec. C-2. Membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the commission consists of 13 members appointed as follows:

1. One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;

2. One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

3. Four public members, 2 of whom must be from or represent interests in the northern part of the State, appointed by the President of the Senate as follows:

- A. An individual representing the environmental justice community;
- B. An individual representing a labor organization whose workers are employed in the energy industry;
- C. A representative of a business that is a large-scale user of energy in the State; and

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- 1 D. An individual representing the interests of the fishing industry in the State;
- 2 4. Four public members appointed by the Speaker of the House as follows:
- 3 A. An individual representing the frontline community;
- 4 B. An individual representing the interests of the renewable energy industry;
- 5 C. An individual representing the interests of the energy industry who is not in the
- 6 renewable energy industry; and
- 7 D. An individual representing a registered apprenticeship program under the Maine
- 8 Revised Statutes, Title 26, chapter 37 or a joint committee as described in Title 26,
- 9 section 3201, subsection 4, paragraph A; and
- 10 5. Three ex officio members as follows:
- 11 A. The Commissioner of Labor or the commissioner's designee;
- 12 B. The Director of the Governor's Energy Office or the director's designee; and
- 13 C. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development or the
- 14 commissioner's designee.

15 For the purposes of this section, "frontline community" means a community that is the  
16 most vulnerable to and will be the most adversely affected by climate change and  
17 inequitable actions because of systemic and historical socioeconomic disparities,  
18 environmental injustice or other forms of injustice.

19 **Sec. C-3. Chairs; quorum. Resolved:** That the Senate member is the Senate chair  
20 and the House of Representatives member is the House chair of the commission. A quorum  
21 is 7 members, and a quorum must be present to start a meeting but is not required to  
22 continue a meeting.

23 **Sec. C-4. Appointments; convening of commission. Resolved:** That all  
24 appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this  
25 resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative  
26 Council once all appointments have been made. When the appointment of all members has  
27 been completed, the chairs of the commission shall call and convene the first meeting of  
28 the commission. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but  
29 not all appointments have been made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative  
30 Council may grant authority for the commission to meet and conduct its business.

31 **Sec. C-5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall:

- 32 1. Review and evaluate the State's current energy workforce, including compensation
- 33 levels and benefits that are provided for workers in the energy industry;
- 34 2. Consider the current workforce demands of the State's energy industry and how best
- 35 to meet the needs of energy consumers, including the number and types of jobs needed to
- 36 achieve the State's energy policy and goals;
- 37 3. Consider the current compensation levels, including benefits associated with the
- 38 types of jobs needed to meet the State's energy policy and goals;
- 39 4. Review any current efforts to ensure individuals employed in the State's energy
- 40 industry experience a just and equitable transition to existing and potential future jobs in
- 41 the energy industry, including efforts to mitigate potential losses in compensation and

# COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

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1 benefits, establish a crosswalk of transferable skills and certifications and address new or  
2 supplemental training needs;

3 5. Consider the economic benefits of a well-compensated workforce in the State as it  
4 pertains to careers that help the State meet its energy policies and goals; and

5 6. Examine how a coordinated and holistic statewide effort to ensure a just and  
6 equitable transition for individuals employed in the State's energy industry could benefit  
7 from the establishment of a state agency, such as an Office of Just and Equitable Transition,  
8 dedicated to that purpose and how such an agency could also help meet the needs of  
9 employers in the energy industry.

10 **Sec. C-6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the  
11 Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the commission, except that  
12 Legislative Council staff support is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or  
13 special session.

14 **Sec. C-7. Report. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, no later than  
15 December 4, 2024, the commission shall submit a report to the joint standing committees  
16 of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters and labor matters that includes  
17 the commission's findings and recommendations. The report may include a review of  
18 current and future needs of the State's energy industry and its workforce, including needs  
19 related to compensation, transferable skills and training. The report may also include  
20 recommendations for the structure and functions of a state agency dedicated to ensuring a  
21 just and equitable transition for the State's workforce and meeting the needs of the  
22 businesses in the energy industry that employ them. The joint standing committees may  
23 each report out a bill to the 132nd Legislature in 2025 related to the report.'

24 Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section  
25 number to read consecutively.

26 **SUMMARY**

27 This amendment replaces the bill with a resolve. The amendment does the following.

28 1. Part A directs the Public Utilities Commission to conduct an inquiry that includes  
29 an evaluation of investment planning undertaken by gas utilities and consideration of a  
30 framework for commission oversight of future investments made by gas utilities. By  
31 December 1, 2025, the commission must submit a report to the joint standing committee of  
32 the Legislature having jurisdiction over utility matters that includes an overview of the  
33 inquiry, a summary of any actions the commission plans to take as well as any  
34 recommendations for legislation. The committee may report out a bill related to the report  
35 to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

36 2. Part B requires the Governor's Energy Office in consultation with the Public Utilities  
37 Commission, to review and evaluate various issues related to the natural gas industry in the  
38 State. By December 1, 2025, the Governor's Energy Office must submit a report to the joint  
39 standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utility matters that includes  
40 an overview of the evaluation and any recommendations for legislation. The committee  
41 may report out a bill related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd  
42 Legislature.





# 131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 2077

LR 2893(02)

**An Act Regarding Customer Costs and the Environmental and Health Effects of Natural Gas**

**Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-890)**

**Committee: Energy, Utilities and Technology**

**Fiscal Note Required: Yes**

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## Fiscal Note

### Legislative Cost/Study

#### Legislative Cost/Study

The general operating expenses of this study are projected to be \$1,650 in fiscal year 2024-25. The Legislature's budget for the 2024-2025 biennium includes \$14,500 in each of fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25 for the costs of legislative studies, as well as \$38,909 of balances carried over from prior years for this purpose. Whether these amounts are sufficient to fund all studies will depend on the number of studies authorized by the Legislative Council and the Legislature. The additional costs of providing staffing assistance to the study during the interim can be absorbed utilizing existing budgeted staff resources.

#### Fiscal Detail and Notes

Any additional costs to the Public Utilities Commission, the Governor's Energy Office, the Department of Labor and the Department of Economic and Community Development from the provisions of this bill are expected to be minor and can be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.