

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Philip L. Bartlett, II
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Harry Lanphear
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

December 6, 2023

Senator Mark Lawrence, Chair
Representative S. Paige Zeigler, Chair
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

RE: Report required pursuant to Public Law 2023, chapter 307 on the Interconnection Working Group

Dear Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology:

During the First Special Session of the 131st Legislature, [Public Law 2023, chapter 307](#)¹ (Act) was enacted and went into effect on October 26, 2023. Section 8 of the Act requires the Maine Public Utilities Commission (Commission) to convene a working group² “to collaborate and resolve disputes relating to the implementation of the State’s small generator interconnection procedures for Level 1 and Level 2 facilities, as defined in Chapter 324 of the Commission’s Rules.” The Act requires the Commission to submit three reports on the activities of the working group. The first report is due on December 6, 2023, an interim report is due on December 6, 2024, and the final report is due on December 6, 2025.

Chapter 324 of the Commission’s rules addresses the processes utilities and interconnection facility owners and developers must follow to connect a small generator with the transmission and distribution utility (T&D Utility) distribution system. Chapter 324 divides interconnection facilities into categories based on size and whether the facilities pass required screens. Level 1 facilities are smaller than 25 kilowatts (kW). A typical example of a Level 1 facility is a residential rooftop solar facility. Level 2 facilities are between 25 kW and 2 megawatts. An example of a Level 2 facility is a small commercial solar installation.

The Commission began reaching out to developers and the utilities before the legislation went into effect. Staff reached out to individuals who matched the requirements, with a focus on finding individuals with diverse perspectives on the challenges specific to Level 1 and Level 2 interconnection. This required multiple rounds of reaching out to find people willing to commit to the working group. During our first meeting, the group concluded it would be beneficial to include additional people with specific Level 1 experience, and two new members were invited and have committed to join for the second meeting.

The first meeting took place on November 17, 2023. During the meeting the participants introduced themselves and decided on which priority issues they wanted to focus. The group decided to start by looking at solutions related to capacity for small projects, with a specific focus on reserved capacity. This

¹ LD 327

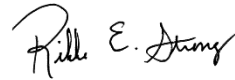
² The membership of the working group is attached to this letter.

topic was raised as an ideal issue for a working group during the most recent Chapter 324 rulemaking hearing.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2023. During this meeting the group will receive a presentation from Versant Power about the reasons behind the lack of capacity on some circuits. The group will then begin discussions on a proposal from member Vaughn Woodruff of ReVision Energy about reserved capacity as a potential solution to address this issue. Because interconnection is a highly technical area in which to seek solutions, the group decided it would be best to identify one specific area of dispute and work to come to a consensus on that before moving on to the next topic.

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to update you on the beginning phase of this working group. The working group will continue to meet monthly for the first year as required by the Act. We will update the Committee on the group's progress in the interim report to be submitted by December 6, 2025, but would be more than happy to provide updates at the request of the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rikka E. Strong". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rikka" being the most prominent part.

Rikka Strong, Staff Attorney
Maine Public Utilities Commission

cc: Lindsay Laxon, Legislative Analyst, Office of Policy and Legal Analysis

Working Group Members Pursuant to Public Law 2023, chapter 307

One or More Representatives from CMP

- Keith Radonis
- Kim Cullen
- Kathleen Newman

One or More Representatives from Versant

- David Norman
- Nate Cota
- Tyler Stanley

Representatives from 2 or more companies engaged in the development and construction of Level 1 and Level 2 facilities in the CMP service Territory (several also work in Versant territory)

- Aaron Cartterfield, Maine Solar Solutions
- Chris Byers, Branch Renewable Energy
- Kate Tohme, New Leaf Energy

Representatives from 2 or more companies engaged in the development and construction of Level 1 and Level 2 facilities in the Versant service territory (several also work in CMP territory)

- Todd Maynard, Maynard's Electric
- Dan Passarello, Nexamp
- Vaughn Woodruff, ReVision Energy
- Danny Piper, Sundog Solar

Any other person that the commission determines necessary to ensure that all interests related to interconnection issues are fairly represented

- Audrey Puleio, BNRG, expertise in Level 4s

Public Utilities Commission Staff:

- Romayn Richards, Analyst
- Rikka Strong, Staff Attorney