



Troy D. Jackson
President of the Senate

THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Commissioners Bartlett, Davis, and Scully,

I would like to express my enthusiastic support for moving forward with the Northern Maine Transmission Line. Throughout this process, we have seen time and again how such a line would benefit the people of Northern Maine, the state as a whole, and the entire New England region. It is in the best interest of the whole community to move forward decisively on this project and I urge you to approve the bids you tentatively awarded contracts to for transmission and distribution in October.

My primary goals in pursuing the creation of the Northern Maine Transmission Line were to unlock northern Maine's renewable energy generation, to get Maine closer to reaching our ambitious climate change mitigation goals, and to ensure that energy costs are affordable for all Mainers as we achieve these aims.

As you all know well, renewable energy projects in Aroostook County face significant economic challenges due to the lack of connection to the New England power grid. Energy generated in northern Maine must go through the Canadian power grid in New Brunswick to be sold to consumers through any American power grid. The wheeling charges associated with this process are cost-prohibitive, making energy development in northern Maine unattractive despite the region's ideal conditions for renewable energy generation. Approval of this project will help in alleviating these long-standing challenges.

Unlocking northern Maine's wind energy potential is also essential to enable the state to meet its ambitious climate goals. Our state has set highly ambitious goals to offset greenhouse gasses and generate power through electric means – and developing wind energy is essential to meeting these goals. Every part of Maine has the potential to contribute to meeting these goals, but northern Maine is uniquely positioned to provide wind energy to the state and move us toward a future where Mainers don't need to rely on fossil fuels for energy and heat.

While the state's climate goals are vitally important to our future, I have always stressed the importance of ensuring that any projects we pursue are affordable for everyday Mainers who are already facing unprecedented energy costs. That is why the bill I sponsored to create this project included requirements that the PUC ensure that any approved projects are affordable. Massachusetts' commitment in the beginning of January to finance up to 40 percent of the energy created by this project ensures that costs for Mainers will stay low while the state retains the majority of the energy produced. This commitment also illustrates the potential that northern Maine has to move the whole New England region forward in our efforts to combat climate change and create a regional sustainable energy market.

The success of this process so far speaks to how much potential northern Maine has to benefit the renewable energy market. All that's left is for the Maine PUC to give final approval to the two projects so we can unleash the economic potential of Aroostook County and provide affordable and reliable homegrown renewable energy to the good people of Maine.

Thank you,
Senate President Troy Jackson