

March 21, 2023

Senator Mark Lawrence, Chair  
Representative Paige Ziegler, Chair  
Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

**Re: Testimony in support of LD 924, “Resolve, to Provide Legislative Approval of Northern Maine Transmission Infrastructure”**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Ziegler, members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee:

My name is Doug Mulvey and I am a Vice President with LS Power. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

I am a professional engineer and have worked for LS Power for approximately 17 years. In that time, I have developed several high voltage transmission projects totaling over 350 miles that were successfully energized and are operating today. We have developed and own approximately 700 miles of 345 and 500 kV transmission facilities across the country. LS Power is excited to support the sponsor’s amendment to LD 924.

LS Power was founded in 1990 and has raised just under \$50 billion in debt and equity financing to invest in energy infrastructure across the United States. We have constructed hundreds of miles of transmission lines, including in Nevada, Texas, Indiana, Kentucky, New Jersey, Delaware, and New York. We have been a strong advocate for competition in the transmission development marketplace. We are a leading developer of transmission facilities similar to those contemplated in Aroostook County through some unique solutions proposed in these competitive solicitations, including cost containment and fixed prices.

I want to be clear: LS Power is in Maine looking to invest approximately \$1 billion because of the bipartisan leadership demonstrated by Senate President Troy Jackson and Senate Republican Leader Trey Stewart in the spring of 2021. This transmission line was selected by the Maine Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”) in furtherance of the legislature’s objectives set out in the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Program passed in that year. We believe we have the skills, technical expertise, and – most importantly – the ability to listen and learn from the important feedback of the people of Maine.

Late last year we were honored to have been selected by the PUC to build a new 345 kV transmission solution capable of delivering 1,200 MW from Aroostook County. The PUC found that our transmission line – and the unaffiliated generation project – are significantly less expensive<sup>1</sup> than any of the other bids. This cost-effective approach is exactly what has set apart LS Power from many of its competitors. Importantly, the PUC’s approval to purchase up to 60%

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<sup>1</sup> PUC Docket 2021-00369

of the project costs was paired with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' decision to participate in funding the remaining 40%. Both states decided to approve these projects because of their ability to help each cost effectively meet their clean energy goals while also delivering new investment and creating hundreds of high-paying construction job opportunities over a multiple year period.

We know we have lots of work ahead of us including local, state and federal permitting – in particular, the PUC's Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity determination – and we look forward to finalizing project details in the coming months. To assist us in these efforts we have retained a number of Maine companies that are experts in public outreach, environmental studies and permitting, design engineering, and legal counsel. Those firms are actively working to advance this project. We also understand how important it is to go into communities and listen, learn, and modify our plans to limit impacts where possible. We expect to begin our public engagement process this spring and continue that for multiple years throughout our permitting, development and construction process. Our near-term plan includes holding approximately eight (8) meetings in the routing study areas in the coming months where we will notify the local residents about the opportunity to look closely at our alternative routes and then solicit their feedback.

We are and will continue to expend considerable financial resources to advance this important project. This is why we believe passing LD 924 now is such an important signal to allow companies like ours to continue investing in the state.

This committee has undoubtedly heard all of the financial hardships Mainers are enduring now through high electricity prices. The Aroostook projects are an important step toward addressing that problem for Maine ratepayers. The PUC has recognized that the influx of renewable energy into the regional grid will also place downward pressure on electricity prices, benefiting consumers in Maine. Being able to interconnect Maine-made, fixed price, long-term contracted clean energy will help shield consumers from price swings while growing the economy and reducing emissions.

I along with the rest of our team look forward to continued engagement with all stakeholders – community members, elected officials, municipalities, environmental and conservation organizations, regulators, business leaders, and many others – to ensure we deliver the most beneficial project while minimizing community and environmental impacts.

We appreciate the leadership and support of the sponsor and all of the co-sponsors and look forward to being able to answer any questions. We respectfully urge this committee to vote ought to pass.

Thank you.