

From: [Pankaj Patil](#)
To: [DOER](#)
Cc: [George Barnett](#); energy.storage@maine.gov
Subject: Comments on Draft Energy Storage RFP – Stakeholder Engagement, Workforce, and Economic Impact
Date: Monday, April 20, 2026 4:14:47 PM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To,

The Maine Department of Energy Resources Team,

Karp Strategies (<https://www.karpstrategies.com/>) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the *Draft Energy Storage RFP* issued by the Maine Department of Energy Resources pursuant to 35-A M.R.S. §10313.

As an advisory firm specializing in infrastructure strategy, stakeholder engagement, and economic development for complex projects across sectors in the U.S., we commend the Department for advancing a procurement framework that integrates cost-effectiveness with community and policy outcomes.

We offer the following recommendations to strengthen the RFP's clarity, implementability, and long-term impact:

1. Strengthen Guidance on Stakeholder Engagement Plans (SEP)

The RFP appropriately elevates stakeholder engagement as a core requirement. To improve consistency and effectiveness across bids, we recommend:

- Providing a minimum framework or template for the SEP (e.g., required stakeholder categories, engagement milestones, reporting metrics).
- Clarifying evaluation criteria for SEPs, including how community acceptance, responsiveness, and adaptability will be assessed.
- Encouraging early-stage engagement benchmarks (e.g., pre-application outreach, documented stakeholder feedback integration).

This will ensure comparability across proposals while preserving flexibility for project-specific approaches.

2. Clarify Expectations for Workforce and Economic Development Outcomes

While economic benefits are central to evaluation, the RFP would benefit from clearer articulation of workforce-related expectations. We recommend:

- Requiring a high-level workforce strategy outlining anticipated job creation, local hiring approaches, and partnerships (e.g., unions, training providers).
- Encouraging bidders to quantify local and regional economic impacts, including supply chain participation and small business engagement.
- Providing guidance on how workforce and economic outcomes will be weighted relative to cost-effectiveness.

Clearer expectations will help bidders align proposals with state priorities and improve the credibility of economic impact claims.

3. Integrate Community and Environmental Considerations into Evaluation Criteria

The RFP implicitly recognizes environmental and community impacts. We recommend:

- Explicitly incorporating community impact and environmental stewardship into the evaluation framework.
- Encouraging bidders to describe mitigation strategies and co-benefits (e.g., reduced local impacts, land use considerations, community benefits).

This will better align project selection with Maine's broader climate and community objectives.

4. Consider Post-Award Engagement and Reporting Expectations

Given the importance of sustained community engagement, we suggest:

- Clarifying post-award stakeholder engagement requirements, including reporting cadence and accountability mechanisms.
- Providing guidance on how ongoing engagement performance may influence contract compliance or evaluation.

We believe that thoughtful integration of these elements will not only strengthen project outcomes but also accelerate successful deployment of energy storage across Maine.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering these comments.

Regards,

--

Pankaj Patil (he/him)

Karp Strategies | Director

e: pankaj@karpstrategies.com

c: 347.949.8472

[Web](#) | [News](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)