



State of Maine  
Office of the Public Advocate  
112 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0112  
(207) 624-3687 (voice) 711 (TTY) [www.Maine.gov/meopa](http://www.Maine.gov/meopa)

Janet T. Mills  
GOVERNOR

Barry J. Hobbins  
PUBLIC ADVOCATE

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Chairman Lawrence, Chairman Berry and Members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee,

The Office of the Public Advocate (“OPA”) testifies in “general” support of LD 1614 “Resolve, Establishing the Commission To Study the Economic, Environmental and Energy Benefits of Energy Storage to the Maine Electricity Industry” which resolve establishes the Commission To Study the Economic, Environmental and Energy Benefits of Energy Storage to the Maine Electricity Industry.

It is our feeling at the OPA with the growth of renewables that energy storage is becoming an increasingly important area to study. Electricity storage is essential in helping integrate more renewable energy into the electricity grid. Electricity storage can produce cost savings by allowing generation facilities to operate at optimal levels and reduce use of less efficient generating units which would otherwise only run at peak times.

Additionally, the added capacity provided by electricity storage can also lower costs by delaying or avoiding the need to build additional power plants or transmission and distribution facilities.

The OPA would like to offer a suggestion with regard to membership that one member be a representative from Northern Maine who is familiar with the unique aspects of generation in that area.

As LD 1614 is currently written it is unclear as to why the OPA is mentioned as offering staff support but is not included as a Commission member. The OPA would welcome the opportunity to be on the Commission and would welcome the responsibility of providing meaningful input on the study.

Thank you for your time, attention and consideration of this testimony. The Office of the Public Advocate looks forward to working with the Committee on LD 1614, and will be present at the work session to assist the Committee in its consideration of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,



Barry J. Hobbins  
Public Advocate