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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 support of LR 3271 “An Act to Implement Recommendations of the Commission to Study Energy Storage.” The bill proposes to advance energy storage as an energy efficiency resource by amending the laws to authorize and direct the Efficiency Maine Trust to consider energy storage programs; by directing the Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”) to investigate and implement opportunities to modernize electricity rate design to incentivize energy storage; and by directing the PUC to open a docket to examine and evaluate whether and how transmission and distribution utilities could engage energy storage ownership and operations.

Last May the OPA testified in the 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 which gave rise to LR 3271.

The OPA felt with the growth of renewables that energy storage was an important area to study and welcomed the opportunity to be a part of the 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.

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 this matter 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