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## **MAINE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC ADVOCATE SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING PUC ACCEPTANCE OF NONWIRES ALTERNATIVE FOR BRUNSWICK/TOPSHAM TRANSMISSION LINE**

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**JULY 5, 2022 | HALLOWELL, ME** – The Public Utilities Commission recently approved the first Nonwires Alternative agreement under the 2019 law, “An Act To Reduce Electricity Costs through Nonwires Alternatives.” The agreement, presented by the OPA, is projected to save ratepayers \$8.5 million over the lifetime of a proposed upgrade to transmission in the Brunswick/Topsham area.

The NWA Act directs the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) to work with an expert in electrical system design, the NWA Coordinator, to review utility proposals for large wire projects. The NWA Coordinator and OPA, working with Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT), analyze utility wire projects to determine if reliability can be met at a lower cost.

William Harwood, Maine’s Public Advocate, said, “This Nonwires agreement is an exciting start to a new way of planning utility investments. The PUC’s decision is a win for the Brunswick/Topsham community and a big step toward reducing transmission costs for consumers. It shows that innovation, hard work and cooperation can result in lower rates. I appreciate the great effort in making the NWA option possible by the people at DNV who is the Nonwires Alternative Coordinator, Efficiency Maine Trust, Central Maine Power, as well the Legislature, the OPA and the Public Utilities Commission.”

The Brunswick/Topsham project is the first opportunity to put the NWA Act into effect. It achieves cost savings and other benefits for ratepayers by removing a transmission line that is no longer needed.

“I’m extremely encouraged to see this innovative strategy providing a new path to reduce electricity costs for Maine ratepayers while expanding pathways for efficiency, storage and renewables,” said Michael Stoddard, Executive Director of the Efficiency Maine Trust.

“This represents a breakthrough in the planning and development of Maine’s electric grid, and it would not have been possible without strong coordination among Efficiency Maine, the Office of Public Advocate, and CMP.”

“CMP supports this collaborative process, we found it very productive to participate, and we are pleased with the agreement it produced. Serving 7,800 CMP customers in the

Brunswick-Topsham area, the project underwent a thorough examination over more than two years, and we will begin planning the work on the power solution,” said Joe Purington, president and CEO of CMP.

The NWA Option incorporates a battery energy storage system, targets energy efficiency investments, and makes other reliability upgrades. By approving this agreement, the PUC begins to fulfill the legislative vision of reducing transmission line costs for Maine’s ratepayers.