132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document	**No. 197**
S.P. 84	In Senate, January 14, 2025

Resolve, to Direct the Governor's Energy Office to Conduct a Study Regarding the Future of Electric Transmission Infrastructure in the State

(EMERGENCY)

Reference to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology suggested and ordered printed.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec.
Cosponsored by Senator: FARRIN of Somerset, Representative: WADSWORTH of Hiram.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the Governor's Energy Office needs sufficient time to conduct the study directed by this legislation and must commence its work as soon as possible; and

Whereas, the matters to be studied by the office implicate critical and pressing issues related to the effects of climate change on the State, its communities and its environment and natural resources; and

Whereas, the results of this study could have implications for electric transmission infrastructure procurements in the near future; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Study of future electric transmission infrastructure needs. Resolved: That the Governor's Energy Office, referred to in this resolve as "the office," shall conduct a study of matters related to the State's future electric transmission infrastructure needs. The study must include a review of:

1. Existing processes for the siting and permitting of new and upgraded electric transmission infrastructure in the State, including opportunities for public engagement and methods for efficiently meeting permitting or regulatory requirements;

2. Best practices related to electric transmission planning, siting, permitting and community engagement from other states or regions, including consideration of different types of state siting authorities and consideration of the potential for the sharing of electric transmission infrastructure costs with other states;

3. Existing analyses of future electric transmission needs in the State necessary to integrate new renewable resources as well as to ensure reliability, improve market efficiency or support the achievement of the State's policy goals, including the goals established pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3210, subsection 1-A; Title 35-A, section 3404; Title 35-A, chapter 38; and Title 38, section 576-A;

4. Types of existing rights-of-way and opportunities for potential use of those rights-of-way for siting of electric transmission infrastructure in the State, including colocation with transportation, electric transmission and railway rights-of-way; and

5. Existing and emerging technology and construction methods, such as grid-enhancing technologies, advanced conductors and so-called strategic undergrounding, including a cost-benefit analysis comparing buried high-voltage direct current lines with aerial high-voltage alternating current lines and aerial high-voltage direct current lines.

Sec. 2. Stakeholder coordination. Resolved: That the office shall coordinate with state agencies involved in the siting, permitting and regulation of electric transmission infrastructure and solicit information from a stakeholder group to assist in conducting the study under section 1. The office shall hold at least one meeting with the stakeholder group, which must include, but is not limited to:

1. A representative of the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future;

2. A representative of the Public Utilities Commission;

3. A representative of the Department of Economic and Community Development;

4. A representative of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry;

5. A representative of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife;

6. A representative of the Department of Environmental Protection;

7. An individual who is a licensed engineer employed by the Department of Transportation;

8. An individual who is a licensed engineer employed in the private sector;

9. An individual who is a licensed real estate appraiser employed in the private sector;

10. An individual representing the Northern Maine Independent System Administrator;

11. An individual representing the equity subcommittee of the Maine Climate Council established under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 38, section 577-A;

12. An individual representing the interests of private landowners in the State;

13. Two individuals representing each of the 2 investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities in the State;

14. An individual representing consumer-owned transmission and distribution utilities in the State; and

15. An individual representing an electric transmission line developer.

Sec. 3. Report. Resolved: That, by September 1, 2026, the office shall submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology that includes an overview of the study findings pursuant to section 1 along with any recommendations. The committee may report out a bill related to the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

This resolve directs the Governor's Energy Office to conduct a study of matters related to the State's future electric transmission infrastructure needs. It requires the office to coordinate with state agencies involved in the siting, permitting and regulation of electric transmission infrastructure and solicit information from a stakeholder group to assist in conducting the study. It requires the office to submit a report by September 1, 2026 to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology that includes an overview of the study findings along with any recommendations. It provides that the committee may report out a bill related to the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.