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To: DEP, NECEC
Subject: 11/22 Testimony on NECEC

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Good day,

I would like to submit my public testimony.

Regards

John Cote
Farmingdale

It is imperative that we acknowledge the level of distrust, discontent and animosity that the people of the Maine have, and have had for quite some time, towards this utility. The results of this referendum bore that out. Furthermore, the contempt that CMP and its parent companies have demonstrated to the people of Maine through this entire process, send a clear message that the feelings are very much mutual. This is not normal. This is not healthy and it is not sustainable for us as a state.

It is important too to point out that the signature gathering process to get question one onto the ballot, with hundreds of volunteers working out in the cold,

COVID winter of 2020 was born out of a loss of trust not only in CMP, but in our regulatory agencies, namely the DEP and PUC whose mandate it is to be our firewall to corporate greed and abuse.

I would implore upon this agency to use this opportunity to take unambiguous steps to restore some public trust and to examine where it feel short in its mandate to the public and helped enable the messy and painful process we see unraveling before us.

There are no winners here. Too much destruction has taken place already. Termination of the NECEC at this point is simply a step towards restoring balance between the public and private interests.

CMP, its parent companies and Quebec Hydro try to press the case that they secured all the necessary permits. I was at the public testimony for PUC, the DEP and the Army Corps of Engineers. I did not see a particularly transparent process. I heard a lot of compelling testimony, much of it in opposition to this project. Concerns were raised about the impacts on tourism, property values our environment and critical

habitat for threatened species. Few assurances were ever forthcoming on the tangible benefits for Mainers, climate change mitigation or even electricity costs and the DEP left it in the hands of CMP to sell us on the merits of this project and to assure proper oversight. that was naive.

I believe that CMP has passed a point of no return of ever building public trust and credibility. I worry that our regulatory agencies are wading dangerously deep into those same waters.

Public policy, economic policy and science conducted through referendum process is messy, divisive and expensive. It is bad both for the public and for business. I worry it could be the new norm if this agency does not take steps to address the public trust going forward. A first and necessary step is pulling the permit immediately. Every mile of this corridor that is built is another mile of needless destruction that we must inherit.