



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

March 7, 2023

The Honorable Michael Vose
Chairman, House Science, Technology, and Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 304
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 609, AN ACT relative to energy facility siting.

Dear Chairman Vose and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 609, a bill to amend New Hampshire's siting process for energy infrastructure. The NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) supports this bill.

NHDES recognizes the inefficiencies in the current process, the difficulty for the Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) to obtain the quorum needed to hold official meetings due to the make-up of its membership, and SEC's challenges to organize hearings and follow up on submitted complaints. Understanding the importance of a timely and efficient process for the siting of energy infrastructure, the reforms in this bill will better allow the body assigned these responsibilities to fulfill its work without any unnecessary process delays while maintaining transparency with the public and their ability to offer public comments.

NHDES has offered language to ensure the bill is consistent with the federal process for appeals governing some of the permitting programs under NHDES' jurisdiction. We believe our suggested changes are in-line with the intent of the bill and helps to accomplish the overall goal of improved efficiency and clarification of the roles of the various federal and state agencies involved with the siting process for energy infrastructure.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment in support of HB 609. Should you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Scott
Commissioner

cc: Sponsors of HB 609: Representatives Edwards and Bernardy; Senator Watters