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Press Release

Joint Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy Committee Tours RMLD Battery Site

Reading, MA – On Friday, April 23, 2021, new Chairman Jeffrey Roy and six members of the Joint Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy (TUE) Committee of the Massachusetts legislature toured the Reading Municipal Light Department's (RMLD) Minuteman Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in North Reading. The tour provided an opportunity for TUE members to see how the RMLD, a Municipal Light Plant (MLP), utilized a \$1 million MA DOER ACES (Advancing Commonwealth Energy Storage) grant to demonstrate the capabilities of energy storage, a technology with the potential to change the landscape of electricity distribution. In addition to seeing the system firsthand, TUE members were briefed on how RMLD utilizes the BESS to reduce wholesale electricity costs for its customers as part of its Demand Response Program.

RMLD received the \$1 million ACES grant in 2018. The 5 MW, 10 MWH BESS was constructed at its North Reading substation and became operational on June 1, 2019. The system is owned by NextEra Energy Resources and operated under an Energy Storage Agreement between NextEra and the RMLD. The primary purpose of the unit is coincident peak demand management for reductions during critical peak times when electricity is most expensive and to mitigate ISO New England's need to dispatch less environmentally friendly generators. In the 19 months that the BESS has been operational, the RMLD has realized net savings of \$346K by reducing demand during annual Capacity and monthly Transmission peaks. The ACES grant allowed for battery technology to be an integral part of the RMLD objectives under its smart grid technology roadmap.

"I would like to thank the TUE committee members for their interest in on-site learning about battery technology and the innovative work that the RMLD and other MLPs have been doing in the area of energy storage. As well, Energy New England (ENE) for coordinating the event, and NextEra Energy Resources for their technical assistance to allow viewing access of the battery," said Coleen O'Brien, RMLD General Manager. TUE members in attendance included Chairman Jeffrey Roy, House Minority Leader Brad Jones, Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr, Rep. Joan Meschino, Rep. Kate Lipper-Garabedian, Rep. David Robertson, and Rep. Rich Haggerty.

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Photo Caption



TUE Committee Members stand in front of the Minuteman Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in North Reading. Left to Right: Rep. David Robertson, Rep. Kate Lipper-Garabedian, Rep. Joan Meschino, House Minority Leader Brad Jones, Chairman Jeffrey Roy, Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr, and Rep. Rich Haggerty.

About Reading Municipal Light Department: Established in 1894, Reading Municipal Light Department (RMLD) is a municipal electric utility serving over 70,000 residents in the towns of Reading, North Reading, Wilmington, and Lynnfield Center. RMLD has over 29,000 meter connections within its service territory.