

## Mass. to help finance another big Maine power line, this one for Aroostook County wind farms

By [Jon Chesto](#) Globe Staff, Updated August 31, 2026, 11:56 a.m.



The Saddleback Ridge Wind Project, in Maine's Franklin County. ROBERT F. BUKATY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

With the Trump administration thwarting construction of any [new offshore wind farms](#), New England has turned instead to the northern Maine wilderness for new energy.

Maine's Public Utilities Commission last week [approved a procurement](#) that would help finance a new 100-plus-mile power line with a capacity of 1,200 megawatts, enough power for more than one million homes, stretching from remote Aroostook County to a town near Bangor. It would be built by Avangrid, while ratepayers in five New England states, including Massachusetts, would pick up the tab.

The goal is to tap into onshore wind power that could be available in Aroostook, [a vast area](#) along the Canadian border that's not connected to New England's grid. Toward that end, the Maine commission also last week gave the green light to support the construction of an 800-megawatt wind farm there, proposed by Clearway Energy, by agreeing to buy most of its energy, although that project won't go up without the Avangrid line.

This power-line decision comes roughly eight months after [Avangrid finished](#) the 145-mile New England Clean Energy Connect, a \$1.6 billion transmission project designed to draw hydroelectricity from Canada to Massachusetts. By coincidence, the NECEC line was not transmitting power for most of the past week; Montreal-based utility Hydro-Quebec says this was because of a transmission issue on the Quebec side of the line that has since been resolved, not because of [ramped-up tensions over trade](#) with the Trump administration.

It's not clear how much money Massachusetts will contribute to the total cost of the future Avangrid line, which will link Haynesville in Aroostook County to Pittsfield, mostly via existing rights-of-way. The price tag has not been disclosed, and the precise allocations still need to be negotiated by the participating states, though Maine has said it will pick up 11 percent of the cost, close to the state's portion of overall power usage in New England. Massachusetts, meanwhile, represents about half of New England's electricity consumption.

Rebecca Tepper, energy secretary in Governor Maura Healey's administration, hailed the transmission project as a way to obtain clean, affordable energy for New England, from within the region.



A wind farm in Canton, Maine. ROBERT F. BUKATY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

“As global energy prices continue to rise due to President Trump’s reckless wars abroad, we need to tap more homegrown resources,” Tepper said in a statement. “Massachusetts is proud to be a part of this effort to increase energy supply and lower bills, and we look forward to the continued collaboration with our partners across the region. When New England states work together, we can build a stronger, more reliable grid and a more affordable energy future.”

A spokesperson for Avangrid said the Aroostook line still needs to undergo extensive engineering, permitting and community engagement, though the use of existing corridors and rights-of-way should minimize any uncertainty and disruption. It’s not yet clear when the project will start.

The decision in Maine’s capital comes as New England energy officials mull [another \\$2.2 billion transmission project](#) that could reduce congestion on the grid in New Hampshire and Maine, which would in part enable power from Aroostook to flow more freely through the region. Grid overseer ISO

New England recently picked that Avangrid-Eversource project out of several bidders, though state officials have another two weeks to decide whether they'll reject it.

Maine officials have been trying for years to figure out ways to harness wind energy in Aroostook County, and in fact had [settled on a different solution](#) three years ago: a wind farm proposed by Longroad Energy and a transmission line to be built by LS Power. Massachusetts would have contributed to those projects as well, but they died amid surging inflation and [local opposition](#) to the LS line.

In the case of the new Avangrid line, trade group president Francis Pullaro said it will be funded by the five states — all the New England states except New Hampshire — through a tariff administered by ISO New England on wholesale electric rates.

“This is probably the least [expensive] new generation, even with the transmission, to build in New England,” said Pullaro, who leads RENEW Northeast. “They realized they needed to do it if they wanted to make a dent in affordability and bring new clean energy on board.”

Senator Mike Barrett, cochairman of the Massachusetts Legislature’s telecom and energy committee, hailed the news from Augusta as a relief in the face of Trump administration opposition to all the major offshore wind farms that were once planned to support the region’s grid. Now, only two remain: the [Revolution Wind](#) and Vineyard Wind 1 projects.

“Electricity that pours into that grid from Maine ultimately helps with the Massachusetts capacity, especially on overtaxed and hot days, and especially cold ones,” Barrett said. “It is further indication that we’re going to survive Donald Trump too. We’re adding to both grid capacity and clean energy supply in the face of non-cooperation, to say the least, from D.C.”