Views of Maine Voters Toward
A Proposed CMP Transmission Line

March 2019
This document presents the results of a survey conducted by Critical Insights on behalf of the Natural Resources Council of Maine. The purpose of the survey was to gauge views toward an electricity transmission corridor that Central Maine Power is proposing to build through western Maine in order to deliver energy from Canada to Massachusetts.

The survey was conducted by telephone between March 11 and March 27, 2019. A total of 850 respondents took part in the survey. Among these 850 respondents, a total of 299 are residents of Franklin County (124 respondents) or Somerset County (175 respondents), as these are the counties most directly impacted by the proposed transmission line.

In order to qualify for the survey, respondents were required to live in Maine and be registered to vote in the state. The results of the statewide data presented in this report have a margin of sampling error of +/- 3.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Final data were statistically weighted to reflect the age, gender, and county populations of the state.
Nine out of ten registered voters in Maine know about CMP’s proposed transmission corridor.

Among all (n=850)

89% Have Seen, Read, or Heard about the CMP Project.

“Have you seen, read, or heard anything recently about Central Maine Power’s plan to build this power line through Western Maine?”
A majority of surveyed Mainers overall oppose building the CMP transmission line corridor, with half *strongly* opposing it.

Top of Mind Position: With No Positive or Negative Information in Question

- Strongly oppose: 65%
- Somewhat oppose: 14%
- Somewhat support: 8%
- Strongly support: 7%
- No opinion/Not sure: 20%

**NET OPPOSE: 65%**

**NET SUPPORT: 15%**

Environmental concerns are the most common reasons for opposing the transmission line, with many voters troubled that those impacts are not offset by any direct benefits to Maine.

**Based on everything you may know about the proposed CMP corridor, would you support or oppose its construction?**
Residents of Franklin and Somerset Counties are particularly opposed to the CMP transmission line corridor – at least three out of four strongly oppose it in these counties.

"Based on everything you may know about the proposed CMP corridor, would you support or oppose its construction?"

Top of Mind Position: With No Positive or Negative Information Provided

**Franklin County**
- Strongly oppose: 80%
- Somewhat oppose: 10%
- Somewhat support: 3%
- Strongly support: 3%
- No opinion/Not sure: 5%

**Somerset County**
- Strongly oppose: 75%
- Somewhat oppose: 8%
- Somewhat support: 6%
- Strongly support: 3%
- No opinion/Not sure: 8%

Among all (n=124)
- NET OPPOSE: 90%
- NET SUPPORT: 6%

Among all (n=175)
- NET OPPOSE: 83%
- NET SUPPORT: 9%
Voters are skeptical that the CMP transmission line will provide benefits to Maine. Seven out of ten overall feel it would be a *bad deal* for Maine people.

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**Which comes closest to your view?**

- Overall, the CMP corridor would be a good deal for Maine people: 13%
- Overall, the CMP corridor would be a bad deal for Maine people: 72%
- Not Sure: 14%

Among all (n=850)

“I’m going to read you two statements, and I would like you to say which one of these comes closest to your view.”
Almost nine out of ten voters in Franklin and Somerset Counties feel the project would be a bad deal for Maine people.

“I’m going to read you two statements, and I would like you to say which one of these comes closest to your view.”

Which comes closest to your view?

**Franklin County**

- Overall, the CMP corridor would be a good deal for Maine people: 5%
- Overall, the CMP corridor would be a bad deal for Maine people: 88%
- Not Sure: 7%

**Somerset County**

- Overall, the CMP corridor would be a good deal for Maine people: 10%
- Overall, the CMP corridor would be a bad deal for Maine people: 85%
- Not Sure: 5%

Among all (n=124)

Among all (n=175)
Seven out of ten voters across Maine believe the CMP corridor would do more harm than good to the state’s environment.

“I’m going to read you two statements, and I would like you to say which one of these comes closest to your view.”

Which comes closest to your view?

- Overall, the CMP corridor would do more good than harm to our environment
  - 16%

- Overall, the CMP corridor would do more harm than good to our environment
  - 68%

- Not sure
  - 16%

Among all (n=850)
Nine out of ten voters in Franklin County and seven out of ten voters in Somerset County feel the CMP corridor would do more harm than good to Maine’s environment.

Which comes closest to your view?

**Franklin County**
- Overall, the CMP corridor would do more good than harm to our environment: 8%
- Overall, the CMP corridor would do more harm than good to our environment: 87%
- Not sure: 5%

**Somerset County**
- Overall, the CMP corridor would do more good than harm to our environment: 18%
- Overall, the CMP corridor would do more harm than good to our environment: 70%
- Not sure: 11%

“I’m going to read you two statements, and I would like you to say which one of these comes closest to your view.”
Two out of three surveyed voters would support a bill requiring DEP to independently review whether the project would reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including almost half who would strongly support that review.


- Strongly support: 46%
- Somewhat support: 19%
- Somewhat oppose: 4%
- Strongly oppose: 17%
- Not sure/No opinion: 14%

NET SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENT CLIMATE REVIEW: 65%

*This year, Maine lawmakers will consider a bill that would require the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to conduct an independent review of the CMP corridor project before a permit is granted to determine whether the project would actually benefit the climate by reducing greenhouse gas pollution, as CMP claims. Would you support or oppose a bill requiring the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to conduct such an independent study?*
The anticipated reductions in the cost of electricity are not large enough to sway public opinion – half of Maine voters are less likely to support the transmission line when told the average household would save one dollar per month.

"Proponents of the CMP corridor say that one of its largest benefits would be that it would reduce the cost of electricity. According to the Maine Public Utilities Commission, the amount of the savings for the average Maine household would be about one dollar per month. Would such an impact make you more likely or less likely to support the project, or would it have no impact?"

Reactions to Potential Reduction in Electricity Costs

NET LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT: 51%

Among all (n=850)
Maine voters do not want CMP to bypass local authority – seven out of ten would be less likely to support the transmission line if CMP overrides local votes against the corridor.

“Several Maine towns have voted to oppose CMP’s corridor project, but CMP may try to use a loophole in Maine law to override local authority and build the project anyway. If CMP decides to bypass the will of local towns to build this project, would that make you more likely or less likely to support the project, or would it have no impact?”

Support if CMP Bypasses Local Authority

- Much less likely to support: 62%
- Much more likely to support: 2%
- A little more likely to support: 2%
- A little less likely to support: 7%
- Not sure: 7%
- No impact: 21%

NET LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT: 68%
Almost two out of three Mainers support a bill to prevent CMP from forcing towns to accept the transmission line – half *strongly* support such a bill.

**Support for Bill To Prevent Bypassing Local Authority**

- Strongly support: 52%
- Somewhat support: 16%
- Somewhat oppose: 5%
- Strongly oppose: 16%
- No opinion: 7%
- Not sure: 9%

**NET SUPPORT FOR BILL: 62%**

Among all (n=850)

“Would you support or oppose passage of a bill in the Maine legislature that would prevent CMP from forcing towns to accept the transmission line passing through their town?”
Only one out of ten Mainers think the governor should support the proposed transmission line, compared to half who believe the governor should oppose the transmission line.

Position of the Governor on the Project

- Governor should oppose 47%
- Governor should take no position 23%
- Governor should support 11%
- Not sure 19%

70% of Mainers believe the governor should oppose the CMP corridor or take no position.

“Do you believe the governor of Maine should support the CMP transmission corridor, oppose the CMP transmission corridor, or take no position on the CMP transmission corridor?”
Voters in Franklin and Somerset Counties overwhelmingly feel the governor should oppose the transmission line – less than one in ten believe the governor should support the project.

**Position of the Governor on the Project**

**Franklin County**
- Governor should support: 2%
- Governor should oppose: 65%
- Not sure: 8%
- Governor should take no position: 24%

**Somerset County**
- Governor should support: 9%
- Governor should oppose: 59%
- Not sure: 12%
- Governor should take no position: 19%

*Among all (n=124)

*Among all (n=175)

“Do you believe the governor of Maine should support the CMP transmission corridor, oppose the CMP transmission corridor, or take no position on the CMP transmission corridor?”
The largest share of voters – four out of ten – would be less likely to vote for legislators who support the proposed transmission line. One out of three would be much less likely to vote for legislators who support the transmission line.

"If your state legislator supported CMP’s transmission corridor, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for them in the future, or would it have no impact on your likelihood to vote for them?"

**Views Toward Legislators Who Support Transmission Line**

- **Much less likely to support legislators**: 33%
- **A little less likely**: 10%
- **No impact**: 36%
- **Not sure**: 13%
- **A little more likely**: 2%
- **Much more likely to support legislators**: 5%

**NET MORE LIKELY TO VOTE FOR LEGISLATORS: 7%**

**NET LESS LIKELY TO VOTE FOR LEGISLATORS: 43%**

*Among all (n=850)*
A majority of voters in Franklin and Somerset Counties would be *much less likely* to vote for legislators who support the proposed transmission line.

**Views Toward Legislators Who Support Transmission Line**

**Franklin County**
- Much less likely to support legislators: 57%
- A little less likely: 10%
- No impact: 28%
- Not sure: 3%

**Somerset County**
- Much less likely to support legislators: 53%
- A little less likely: 8%
- No impact: 21%
- Not sure: 8%

**Among all (n=124)**
- NET MORE LIKELY: 3%
- NET LESS LIKELY: 67%

**Among all (n=175)**
- NET MORE LIKELY: 10%
- NET LESS LIKELY: 60%

“If your state legislator supported CMP’s transmission corridor, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for them in the future, or would it have no impact on your likelihood to vote for them?”
### Demographic Characteristics of Surveyed Mainers

#### Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Total (n=850)</th>
<th>Franklin Co. (n=124)</th>
<th>Somerset Co. (n=175)</th>
<th>All Other Counties (n=551)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No formal schooling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar school (up to 8th grade)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some high school</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<td>Graduated high school</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical/vocational/community college</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<td>Some college</td>
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<td>Graduated college</td>
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<td>Graduate school or an advanced degree</td>
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<td>11%</td>
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<td>9%</td>
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<td>&lt;0.5%</td>
<td>&lt;0.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
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<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>&lt;0.5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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#### Party Affiliation

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<tr>
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<th>Somerset Co. (n=175)</th>
<th>All Other Counties (n=551)</th>
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<td>Democrat</td>
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<td>26%</td>
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<td>10%</td>
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<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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#### Gender

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<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total (n=850)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>61%</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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#### Age

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<th>Age</th>
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<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
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<td>45-54</td>
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<td>55-64</td>
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<td>27%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<td>65-74</td>
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<td>19%</td>
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<td>14%</td>
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<td>75+</td>
<td>11%</td>
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# Demographic Characteristics of Surveyed Mainers

## Congressional District

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<th>Congressional District</th>
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<td>Congressional District 1</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congressional District 2</td>
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## Household Income

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<th>Household Income</th>
<th>Total (n=850)</th>
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<th>Somerset Co. (n=175)</th>
<th>All Other Counties (n=551)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $15,000</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<td>$15,000 to less than $25,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<td>6%</td>
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<td>$25,000 to less than $35,000</td>
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<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>6%</td>
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<td>6%</td>
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<td>14%</td>
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<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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## Ethnicity

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<th>All Other Counties (n=551)</th>
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<td>Native American</td>
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<td>97%</td>
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<td>93%</td>
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<td>&lt;0.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
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<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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## County of Residence

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<tbody>
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<td>Cumberland</td>
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<tr>
<td>York</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penobscot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Androscoggin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kennebec</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aroostook</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford</td>
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<td>Hancock</td>
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<td>Franklin</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piscataquis</td>
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