

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Majority Report of the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-27)** on Bill "An Act To Increase the State's Share of the Cost of Health Insurance for Retired Teachers" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 206) (L.D. 293)

Signed:

Senators:

DAUGHTRY of Cumberland
RAFFERTY of York
WOODSOME of York

Representatives:

BRENNAN of Portland
CROCKETT of Portland
DODGE of Belfast
LYMAN of Livermore Falls
McCREA of Fort Fairfield
MILLETT of Cape Elizabeth
ROCHE of Wells
SALISBURY of Westbrook
STEARNS of Guilford

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

SAMPSON of Alfred

READ.

On motion of Representative BRENNAN of Portland, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-27)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-27)** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought to Pass** on Bill "An Act To Continue the Green Power Electricity Offer" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 218) (L.D. 314)

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York
VITELLI of Sagadahoc

Representatives:

BERRY of Bowdoinham
CARLOW of Buxton
CUDDY of Winterport
GROHOSKI of Ellsworth
KESSLER of South Portland
WOOD of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

STEWART of Aroostook

Representatives:

FOSTER of Dexter
GRIGNON of Athens
WADSWORTH of Hiram

READ.

Representative BERRY of Bowdoinham moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bowdoinham, Representative Berry.

Representative **BERRY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and Men and Women of the House, the measure before us would continue the green power electricity offer that the State of Maine has had in place for many years, for at least as long as I have served in this Body. It's a bill that came to us from the Public Utilities Commission because they support the program and believe that it should continue. The Majority Report would allow us to continue the program.

If we fail to accept the Majority Report and to enact this bill as an emergency, then the program will expire on April 1st. At that time, 4,500 Maine residents and businesses will lose the ability to pay an extra two cents per kilowatt hour for green electricity supply. And I want to say that again; these 4,500 Maine residents and businesses are choosing to pay more, two cents per kilowatt hour more, in order to know that their electricity supply is one hundred percent renewable. It bears repeating that our current electricity supply does not come from the utilities but from a competitive market and, in this case, the procurement is done by the PUC with a lot of checks and balances to make sure that all of the trading and renewable energy credits is above board and that no costs are shifted to other residents of the State of Maine.

So, again, the Public Utilities Commission is where this bill originates. I'm the sponsor, but it is a PUC bill, and they are hoping to continue with the program, which will expire on April 1st if we do not act together with the other body today.

Mr. Speaker, all testimony, with the exception of one written document submitted by an individual, was in support of the bill. That includes the utilities themselves. And there is one other option which I will note for those who are interested in green energy and I think this is important for all of us to be aware of so we can advise our constituents. If, by some happenstance today, we are unable to pass this bill as emergency, you might want to know what to tell your constituents. You can tell them if this happens that the green power is no longer available for them at this time, it may come back, but, MEgreenpower.com is where you can learn more about that program that would otherwise end.

Another place you can send them, however, is the Office of the Public Advocates website, where they can learn more about community solar. And there is a very robust market now, as I'm sure you may have read in the paper or perhaps you've received mailers offering community solar options, I'm sure your constituents have too. And the Public Advocate has

information about this community solar options that your constituents, if they are thrown off this program by our lack of action, will still have available to them. So, I would direct your constituents to Maine.gov/meopa that stands for Maine Office of the Public Advocate forward slash M-E-O-P-A and just look up community solar. There's an excellent video there advising folks about how they can save money and also subscribe to a community solar farm. It would be nice if our constituents have all the options, including the ability to pay more for renewables, but that will depend on us here today.

For my part, and with bipartisan majority of my committee, we request that we together here today vote in favor of the pending motion and continue the green power option for our constituents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Hiram, Representative Wadsworth.

Representative **WADSWORTH**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I rise in opposition to the pending motion. This is an idea that should sunset as scheduled to in April. The main power offered doesn't change the electrons that are flowing into the home that you use, those are dictated by the grid. However, this program creates extra administration costs of purchasing renewable energy credits. With the work that this body did in the last Legislature, the percentage of renewables in our grid is increasing. Also, a lot more homes are net measuring their power from rooftop solar and this bill doesn't really do anything to decrease our electric costs. Please follow my light as it's time to let this program sunset.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Dexter, Representative Foster.

Representative **FOSTER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I, too, rise in opposition to this motion. The green energy offer does allow those who wish to pay more on their electric bill and those monies go to buy renewable energy credits. They do not, however, go to reduce your bill or my bill, which may be higher because we have higher cost renewable energy projects that are being paid by the ratepayers. I also would say that because these monies go to purchase RECs, there are plenty of other ways that RECs are being purchased, it is not as necessary as it was when this was first developed to do so and, as I believe the Good Representative mentioned, there are other alternatives to those who wish if they do not have this.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is the Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 13

YEA - Alley, Arford, Bailey, Bell, Berry, Blume, Brennan, Brooks, Bryant, Caiazzo, Cardone, Carlow, Cloutier, Collings, Copeland, Corey, Crafts, Craven, Crockett, Cuddy, Dodge, Doore, Doudera, Dunphy, Evangelos, Evans, Faulkingham, Fay, FecteauJ, FecteauR, Geiger, Gere, Gramlich, Grohoski, Harnett, Hasenus, Hepler, Hymanson, Kessler, Landry, Lookner, Madigan, MartinJ, MartinR, Mathieson, Matlack, McCrea, McCreight, McDonald, Melaragno, Meyer, MillettR, Morales, Moriarty, Nadeau, Newman, O'Connell, O'Neil, Osher, Parry, Paulhus, Pebworth, PerryA, PerryJ, Pierce, Pluecker, Reckitt, Rielly, Riseman, Roberts, Roeder, Sachs, Salisbury, Sharpe, Sheehan, Stover, Supica, Sylvester, Talbot Ross, Tepler, Terry, Tucker, Tuttle, WarrenC, WarrenS, WhiteB, Williams, Wood, Zager, Zeigler.

NAY - Andrews, Arata, Austin, Bernard, Blier, Bradstreet, Carmichael, Collamore, Connor, Costain, Dillingham, Dolloff, Downes, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Foster, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Grignon, Haggan, Hall, Hanley, Head, Hutchins, Javner, Johansen, Kinney, Lemelin, Libby, Lyford, Lyman, MasonR, MillettH, Morris, O'Connor, Ordway, Perkins, Pickett, Poirier, Prescott, Quint, Roche, Rudnicki, Sampson, Skolfeld, Stanley, Stearns, Stetkis, Theriault, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth.

ABSENT - Babbidge, Bickford, Cebra, Harrington, Kryzak, MartinT, WhiteD.

Yes, 90; No, 54; Absent, 7; Excused, 0.

90 having voted in the affirmative and 54 voted in the negative, with 7 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE.**

Representative BERRY of Bowdoinham **PRESENTED House Amendment "A" (H-40)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bowdoinham, Representative Berry.

Representative **BERRY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House, the amendment that I present today would simply remove the emergency preamble; nothing more, nothing less. The program will not have a sunset but that will be -- will not be active until additional actions have been taken by this body and by the executive and of course would not take effect until the fall. So there will be some uncertainty in the program, to say the least, as of April 1st, but we can today amend this bill, go forward with the program, and remove the sunset altogether so that the program exists in perpetuity or until future action by a future Legislature.

I will also add that community solar remains an excellent option for your constituents. They can save as much as 15% off or buy a share in a community solar farm and apply net energy billing to that. So I encourage you to reach out to myself or to any member of the committee if you would like information for your constituents on those options in the State of Maine. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Subsequently, **House Amendment "A" (H-40) was ADOPTED.**

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-40)** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH.**
