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March 2, 2023

## **L.D. 417, An Act to Facilitate Net Energy Billing**

BEFORE THE ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY OF AARP MAINE: IN OPPOSITION

Chairs Lawrence and Zeigler, and the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology:

Good afternoon. My name is Alf Anderson, and I am an Advocacy and Outreach Director with AARP Maine. AARP Maine is a non-partisan, non-profit organization with more than 200,000 members statewide. I'm here today to testify IN OPPOSITION TO L.D. 417 AS PROPOSED.

The purpose of this bill is to respond to widespread evidence that there have been serious billing complications with regard to the implementation of the community solar projects mandated by the Legislature. These solar companies marketed their contracts based on a promise of a 15% bill savings but now find that the actual implementation of that promise was not properly considered in light of the billing obligations required to document this promise on a monthly basis.

AARP is sympathetic to the consumer concerns that no doubt gave rise to this bill. However, as proposed, this bill will impose costs on electric utility ratepayers of CMP and Versant Power to respond to these issues. Furthermore, the bill appears to mandate that these electric utilities share customer information with community solar providers that raises concerns about the privacy of customer identifying or personal financial information.

Our major concern is that there does not appear to be any mandate imposed on the privately owned solar companies to incur the costs necessary to develop a billing system to implement a promise that they made to their customers. As proposed, this bill shifts costs to customers that are not responsible for the difficulties being encountered to implement these solar company contractual promises. We urge the Committee to reject the bill as proposed or significantly amend the bill to impose the costs necessary to correct

or modify current billing systems on the community solar industry. Maine has and will continue to pay excessive costs for this uneconomic net energy billing mandate, and we cannot support any additional costs to be incurred by suffering Maine ratepayers associated with this program.

Thank you,

Alf Anderson  
Associate State Director, Advocacy & Outreach  
AARP Maine