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March 2, 2023

L.D. 509, An Act to Amend the Net Energy Billing Laws to Require Net Energy Billing Credits to be Nonlapsing

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. 509 AS PROPOSED.

The purpose of this bill is to eliminate the current requirement of law that Net Energy Billing credits not otherwise "used" by the customer must expire after a year. By "used" I mean that the customer has not otherwise offset their own usage with the surplus electricity generated by their rooftop solar system. Under this proposal, the NEB credits will never expire and the customer could apparently continue to bank their credits during the life of their system.

AARP opposes this proposal for several reasons. First, the current Net Energy Billing mandate shifts costs to other distribution ratepayers because the "credits" allowed to be used by the rooftop solar customer include distribution services that are not avoided by the customer's solar system, including the system poles and wires, billing system, metering system, call center, storm restoration, etc. As a result, any proposal that would add to this cost shift burden current absorbed by non-solar customers should be rejected.

Second, the current law is designed to prevent customers from installing a system that is larger than their own household usage and this bill would eliminate that signal.

Finally, under the current law the excess credits not used at the end of the year are transferred to the funding of the Arrears Management Program to assist low income

customers with high arrears balances to continue their ability to maintain essential electricity service. This source of funding would apparently be eliminated with this bill.

Thank you,

Alf Anderson
Associate State Director, Advocacy & Outreach
AARP Maine