

3/29/2023

To: Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology,

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1101, An Act to Reduce energy costs by enacting a Home Energy Scoring System

My name is Colin McCullough and I live in Farmingdale.

I am writing as a concerned citizen to urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 1101.

I believe home energy audits should be the central component of increasing energy efficiency in homes in Maine; I worked as a home energy auditor in Massachusetts for 10 years visiting 7,500 homes. I could see first-hand how much of a difference free, in-home energy audits made to help guide homeowners with making energy efficiency upgrades. It was the thousands of conversations at kitchen tables, hearing their energy concerns, walking through their homes and making specific recommendations from an objective, unbiased perspective that made the difference to so many people and really drove homeowners to choose energy efficiency upgrades. People are overwhelmed with conflicting information and don't know where to start given their specific circumstances, and I believe this bill has an opportunity to make this equally available to all Maine homeowners.

- To make energy audits as **widely available** and **valuable** to homeowners as possible, they should be **free** and **in-person**.
- Maine has an opportunity to create an **independent** energy audit program / structure that would provide homeowners with a consistent experience, provide consistent continuing education for new energy auditors as they enter the workforce, a consistent benefit to weatherization contractors, consistent data collection and technical review, consistent updates about Efficiency Maine rebates, tax credits, etc. for increased participation.
- The Inflation Reduction Act will require weatherization rebates to be tied to either home performance-based testing or building energy modeling, which should be done by **independent energy auditors**. This would provide independent, objective quality assurance to ensure that **federal funding** is being used as **efficiently and accurately as possible** in Maine.
- In-person home energy audits could use a standardized scoring system to help identify the energy efficiency upgrades with the greatest benefit, staged in the order that is best for each specific situation, and would provide independent health & safety assessments for each home. There are potential health & safety roadblocks particularly with Maine's older housing stock, which affects quality of life and adoption of energy efficiency upgrades, and energy audits can help identify and resolve those roadblocks.
- Support of home energy audits in Maine with LD 1101 would help create a sustainable marketplace for home energy auditors; currently there are only a handful of independent energy auditors in Maine and this market is **critical** to help drive the increase in the Clean Energy Workforce in Maine.

Respectfully submitted,  
Colin McCullough