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**Testimony in Opposition to LD 1153 (“An Act to Allow Municipalities to Tax Personal Solar Energy Equipment Under 5 Megawatts”)**

**J. Andrew Cashman on behalf of the Maine Association of REALTORS®**

**April 5, 2023**

Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation, my name is Andy Cashman. I am the Founder of Resolve Government Relations. We represent the Maine Association of REALTORS®, a professional trade association established in 1936 with over 6,500 members statewide. REALTORS® grow Maine’s economy and build Maine communities. Our members represent buyers and sellers involved in both residential and commercial real estate transactions. Our membership also includes industry affiliates, such as lenders, closing agents, title agents, appraisers, building inspectors, surveyors, etc. The Maine Association is chartered by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), the largest trade association in the country.

The Maine Association of REALTORS® is opposed to LD 1153. The bill would eliminate the tax exemption for solar power generating equipment for property owners.

MAR supports the voluntary use of alternative energy sources to reduce dependence on non-renewable forms of energy. This bill would remove financial incentives to upgrade efficiency or encourage renewable energy systems in residential properties. Voluntary energy conservation measures including favorable performance-based incentives and financing for costs incurred to reduce energy consumption should be encouraged.

Other policy proposals are being discussed in the legislature to push Maine towards more energy efficient solutions, and the removal of this exemption would be a step backwards and a deterrent to encouraging Maine homeowners to make sustainable improvements to Maine’s housing supply. This exemption is a beneficial tool to encourage Mainers to seek more efficient means of energy consumption without infringing on private property rights.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 1153. Thank you for your time and consideration.



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