

Alex Schild  
Soltage, LLC  
LD 1986

Dear members of the Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications Committee:

Soltage has been developing solar projects since 2005, and in the developing in the state of Maine since 2018.

Soltage supports Maine's net energy billing program because it provides critical electric bill savings while supporting the development of local, clean energy. We also have deep concerns with the OPA legislative effort to effectively kill the current program.

Community solar is a powerful solution to provide access to solar energy for all Mainers. The Maine Net Energy Billing program has jump started Maine into the future of clean and locally produced electricity, with actually built and operating solar projects in Maine. While the Net Energy Billing program has faced challenges and has been modified, the momentum it produced should not be killed.

So, we are highly concerned with calls to change the net energy billing rates for existing projects and those about to become operational. We signed agreements with customers that are counting on receiving the promised bill savings, which make a meaningful difference in their monthly budgets. We strongly urge the Legislature to avoid adopting any policies that would impact those savings and our ability to participate in the program. Further, we encourage the Legislature to take action to ensure community solar can continue to serve more customers, especially low-income and disadvantaged customers, well into the future.

Please vote YES on LD 1986.

The OPA's proposed legislation would effectively shut down solar development in Maine, throwing millions of dollars of investment into disarray. The proposal would harm the 23,000 existing community solar consumers with no plan to address the costs they may incur, and eliminate the opportunity for Mainers of all income levels to use clean, affordable renewable energy.

We invested millions of dollars based on the legislation that was passed enabling the NEB program and specific project contracts. These retroactive changes to signed contracts are a major red flag for our institution. What other anti-business bills will Maine legislators pass, making it less attractive to us and other financial institutions to do business here?

We need economic stability and to be forward-thinking about how we maximize energy and other investments in Maine.

Please vote NO on LD 1347.

We thank you kindly for your consideration.