

Testimony of Rene Augustus La Casse in opposition of
LD 1465: An Act to Amend the Calculation of Tariff Rates and Billing Credits Under Net Energy Billing

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and honorable members of the Energy, Utility, and Technology Committee. I am Rene Augustus La Casse, and I am a resident of Trenton. Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to oppose **LD 1465: An Act to Amend the Calculation of Tariff Rates and Billing Credits Under Net Energy Billing**.

Solar adoption is imperative for our communities to meet local climate goals, as well as those put forth by the Maine Climate Council. Thanks to net energy billing, it permits ratepayers and municipalities to benefit from their investment. In neighboring Ellsworth, a city owned array promises to save \$4 million over twenty years for taxpayers. The PUC's recent inclusion of a municipal exemption to Chapter 324 creates massive opportunities for project ownership around Maine. By changing the tariff calculation, and requiring that NEB credits be used only on supply charges, **LD 1465** seeks to serve the best interests of utilities, and not the communities who seek to pursue renewable energy and save money because of it.

In July, **LD 1986: An Act Relating to Net Energy Billing and Distributed Solar and Energy Storage Systems** was signed into law. Within the last month, the rule changes that resulted from the bill took effect. **LD 1465** seeks to attack these new rules without evidence that they present an issue for communities. It is not thoughtful to tinker with net energy billing calculations before the new rules that resulted from **LD 1986** have an opportunity to take effect. Rule changes like the municipality exemption provide communities like Trenton, who have considered solar energy in the past years, a chance to pursue renewable energy and savings. Tariff calculation changes will weaken the strength of the municipality exemption, and make solar unattainable for communities around Maine.

If these impulsive changes occur as presented in **LD 1465**, they will be costly to ratepayers and our climate. For these reasons, I urge this committee to vote against the passage of **LD 1465: An Act to Amend the Calculation of Tariff Rates and Billing Credits Under Net Energy Billing**.