

Reuben Mahar
Waldoboro
LD 32

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Legislative Document No. 257 (S.P. 124), 'An Act to Eliminate the Practice of Net Energy Billing,' as well as related bills (LD 450, LD 32, and LD 359) that seek to repeal or restrict Net Energy Billing (NEB) in Maine. As a resident of Waldoboro and a solar energy investor, I am deeply concerned about the negative impacts these bills will have on current solar owners, municipalities, and our state's energy future.

The Economic Impact

NEB provides crucial financial savings to over 113,000 participants across Maine, including private citizens, small businesses, and municipalities. Waldoboro itself benefits from a town-owned 125 kW solar array, which offsets municipal energy costs, ultimately saving taxpayer dollars. Eliminating NEB would strip away these savings, forcing higher energy costs onto both residents and local governments.

Utility Hypocrisy & Energy Resilience

Privately owned utilities actively profit from their own solar arrays while seeking to eliminate benefits for private and municipal solar producers. This contradiction underscores the need for policies that encourage distributed generation, which strengthens local energy resilience and reduces reliance on out-of-state energy imports. The removal of Maine's hydroelectric dams has reduced our energy independence, making distributed solar even more essential.

Investment Security & Consumer Trust

Thousands of Mainers, including myself, made significant financial investments in solar technology based on the promise of long-term NEB credits. I personally invested \$52,000 in a 20kW solar array. The absence of clear grandfathering provisions in these bills leaves existing solar owners vulnerable, eroding public trust in state energy policies and discouraging future investments in renewable energy.

Grid Benefits & Cost Savings for All Ratepayers

NEB participants do more than just benefit themselves—they reduce strain on the grid, lower transmission and distribution costs through avoided line losses, and decrease peak demand charges. These factors contribute to a more resilient and cost-effective energy infrastructure, benefiting all Mainers—not just solar owners.

A Balanced Alternative

Rather than eliminating NEB entirely, a more nuanced approach could set reasonable system size caps—such as 2 MW for commercial systems, 200 kW for municipalities, and 40 kW for private owners. This would prevent large-scale abuse of the program while preserving its environmental and economic benefits.

Call to Action

I urge you to oppose LD 257, LD 450, LD 32, and LD 359 in their current forms and instead support revisions that maintain Maine's commitment to sustainable energy, economic stability, and consumer fairness.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your commitment to policies that benefit all Mainers.

Sincerely,

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