

Testimony of William H. Schlesinger

In the matter of pending bills LD 32, LD 257, LD 359, LD 450

19 February 2025

I am William H. Schlesinger a resident of Lubec, Maine, where my wife and I have built a home powered by 6.2 kW of Sunpower Solar panels installed by Revision Energy in 2013. Prior to retiring to Maine, I was an environmental scientist at Duke University for 40 years, specializing in environmental chemistry, including the effects of fossil fuel emissions on local ecosystems and global climate. I was elected to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences in 2003

Our solar panels in Lubec are part of a “net-metering” program that has worked well for us, and delivered significant solar energy to the “grid,” now operated by Versant Power. Typically, we generate more than we use, so we get energy billing credits. But, also typically, we don’t use those credits, so within a year they are a contribution to Versant. Nevertheless, during the 11-year period of our operation, we have seen a tripling of the monthly “connection fee” that links our generation to Versant’s grid. In a very real sense, we are subsidizing our monthly gift to the power company.

The net-metering program was instrumental in our decision to install solar power, which is critical if we are to reduce reliance on electricity derived from fossil fuels, which are a major source of global warming impact. The impacts of climate change in Maine are well documented in the recent report, *Maine’s Climate Future (2015)*, including significant economic losses to rising ocean temperatures (lobster), sea-level rise (coastal flooding), and the maple sugar and ski industries from changes in winter climate.

I urge you to maintain the net-metering program for solar power in the State of Maine. Solar power is a burgeoning industry in Maine and essential to our future economy, health, and stabilization of climate.