

February 20, 2025

Paul & Sharon LaBrie
546 Indiana Road
West Gardiner, ME 04345

Testimony in Opposition to LD32 and LD257 Proposals to Eliminate Net Energy Billing

To Committee Members,

We are a retired couple, each in our 70s, who live on fixed incomes.

In 2017 we built a retirement home here in West Gardiner. Our small house is an all-electric home purposely designed for an aging couple, with all living spaces on one floor, oversized doors for eventual wheelchairs, attached garage and, most importantly, an overarching passive and active solar design that helps us fix our energy costs over our remaining years.

Net energy billing helps to make our house very affordable and comfortable. We no longer have to burn wood, nor do we have to worry about oil price increases and/or oil scarcity. We generate our own electricity with our solar panels, and share the excess with our neighbors. It is a wonderful arrangement which will now be taken away by LD 32 and LD 257 (and/or any similar "wannabe" bills).

Net energy billing gives retired people a functional hedge against utility bill inflation.

Not to mention the obvious. Maine electric utility price inflation is compounded by the fact that CMP is owned by Avangrid, which in turn is a subsidiary of the Spanish firm Iberdrola (whose largest shareholder is Qatar). Whenever we pay our CMP bill, we have visions of our shrinking dollar bills, with wings attached, flying over the ocean to Spain and to Qatar. Costs are best contained by **local** companies. Costs are also subject to supply and demand -- this is Economics 101, folks. In short, the more local electricity we can supply, the lower we can maintain our costs, again, assuming the savings do not magically migrate overseas.

Please do not allow these bills to proceed.

Sincerely,

Paul & Sharon LaBrie