

February 27, 2025

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Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology
Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you all today. My name is Fran Girard, and I serve as a Board Member and Chair of the Facilities Committee with the Maine-based non-profit organization Partners for World Health. We respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to the net energy billing bills before you today, LD 32, LD 257, LD 450, and LD 515.

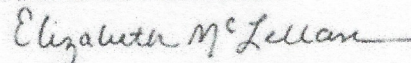
At Partners for World Health, we collect medical supplies and equipment from healthcare facilities, manufacturers, organizations, and individuals; we then evaluate, sort, repackage, and redistribute these supplies to individuals, communities, and healthcare facilities in need. Our goal is to not only provide resources for those in need, but to lower healthcare costs by lowering disposal fees and in turn, eliminate environmental waste. Right here in Maine, we are proud to fulfill many requests received from home health care workers aiding patients, social service organizations, the elderly, and new Mainers.

Our mission is simple: to improve health care and reduce environmental impact by collecting surplus medical equipment and supplies and distributing them to communities in need, locally and globally. It is with that mission in mind that in 2024, we installed a 50 kW AC system on the roof of our main warehouse in Portland. Our solar system offsets 80% of our utility bill on average, enabling us to utilize savings to invest in our mission and disburse more of these vitally needed supplies. We also know that we are contributing to reduced energy costs for all by investing in the benefits solar energy produces for Mainers across the state—reduced supply costs, reduced ratepayer investments into our aging grid -- the list goes on. As you know, the Public Utilities Commission found that such program benefits for the year 2023 outweighed the program costs: every \$1 invested into this program generates \$1.23 in benefits.

We find it deeply concerning that the legislature is considering eliminating the program our system relies upon to operate. As a small non-profit, we pride ourselves in thinking very carefully about every dollar spent. We made this investment to manage our energy costs in reaction to skyrocketing natural gas prices in 2023 and move to a source of energy that is local, stable, and reliable. Should this legislation pass, it would essentially remove the mechanism utilized to receive compensation and credits for the energy produced. We believe such actions are quite simply unfair. Should change need to occur, that should be forward looking, to allow entities like Partners for World Health to adequately plan for such impacts. Otherwise, without warning, this would sadly pull the rug out from underneath us—and the many nonprofits around the state who have chosen to control our energy costs and invest in clean energy transition.

We ask you to please vote “ought not to pass” on these bills. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Partners for World Health



Elizabeth McLellan, RN, MSN, MPH
CEO & Founder



Fran Girard
Board Member & Facilities Committee Chair