

Robert Nelson
Newcastle
LD 32

Testimony in Opposition to

LD32 An Act to Repeal the Laws Regarding Net Energy Billing
and

LD 257 An Act to Eliminate the Practice of Net Energy Billing
and

LD 450 An Act to Lower Electricity Costs by Repealing the Laws Governing Net
Energy Billing
and

LD 515 An Act to Reverse Recent Changes Made to the Law Governing Net Energy
Billing and Distributed Generation

Honorable Senator Lawrence, Honorable Representative Sachs, Distinguished
Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Nelson, and I live in Newcastle. I'm testifying in opposition to LD32 An Act to Repeal the Laws Regarding Net Energy Billing, LD 257 An Act to Eliminate the Practice of Net Energy Billing , LD 450 An Act to Lower Electricity Costs by Repealing the Laws Governing Net Energy Billing and LD 515 An Act to Reverse Recent Changes Made to the Law Governing Net Energy Billing and Distributed Generation

As you know, LD 1986, enacted in 2023 directs the Maine Public Utilities Commission to evaluate Net Energy Billing annually. As shown in the most recent report, the benefits of Net Energy Billing exceed the costs.

I'm currently developing an affordable housing project in Newcastle under MaineHousing's Rural Affordable Rental Housing Program. The project includes an investment in rooftop solar which is used to offset the electrical consumption of the buildings. Net Energy Billing allows the project to capture those savings which are an integral piece of the finances of the project. Without those savings, the higher operating costs would make the project less viable.

None of these proposed Acts would protect existing net energy billing contracts. The idea that the state would allow the electric utilities to renege on existing agreements would not be fair to customers who have made investments based on existing Net Energy Billing rules.

The Net Energy Billing program in Maine has been adjusted over time. There is certainly room for additional adjustments. In particular, I believe that the benefits of Net Energy Billing are greatest when the energy production is closest to its point of consumption - on the customer's premises.