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LD 342

I am writing to express my strong support for LD 342, An Act to Include Nuclear Power in the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard, and LD 343, An Act to Direct the Public Utilities Commission to Seek Informational Bids Regarding Small Modular Nuclear Reactors in the State.

LD 342 appropriately includes nuclear power—specifically from facilities constructed after January 1, 2025—as a renewable capacity resource under the state's portfolio supply requirements. This recognition of nuclear power as a Class I renewable resource is a critical step toward diversifying Maine's energy portfolio with reliable, low-carbon electricity.

LD 343 directs the Public Utilities Commission to annually solicit informational bids for the potential establishment of small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs) in Maine. These reactors, capped at 350 megawatts, are designed for flexibility and efficiency, either operating individually or in combination, and must be licensed by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Gathering this information is a responsible and necessary step in exploring viable energy solutions for our state.

As electricity ratepayers, we are currently paying hundreds of dollars more per year to subsidize solar and other “green” energy initiatives. In practice, this means we are sending money out of state—often to benefit foreign solar panel manufacturers and out-of-state installation companies—while seeing little direct benefit in terms of lower costs or improved energy reliability.

At a time when Maine's electricity costs continue to rise, with Central Maine Power and Versant increasing delivery rates and overall supply costs remaining high, we must focus on solutions that lower rates for consumers. Nuclear power is a proven, efficient, and cost-effective energy source that can provide consistent, reliable electricity—something intermittent sources like wind and solar cannot match.

Maine needs to prioritize affordability and reliability in its energy policy. Let's drive electricity costs down, not up.

For these reasons, I urge support for LD 342 and LD 343. They ought to pass.