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***Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development***

***RE: LD 741—An Act to Increase Preparedness for Solar Power Adoption in Maine***

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Karen Blakelock and I work as the climate and energy policy advisor for the Nature Conservancy in Maine. **I appreciate this opportunity to testify in support of LD 741**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that both nature and people can thrive. We work in more than 70 countries, and use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners.

TNC is fully in support of sec. 1 of this bill, which adopts the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) aiming to encourage the installation of renewable energy systems by ensuring all buildings are built ready to accommodate future installation of solar panels and associated equipment.

According to the Governor's Energy Office, rooftop solar energy can provide a variety of benefits by lowering load on the distribution system and offsetting the energy bill for users in the building. When paired with storage, benefits only increase.<sup>1</sup>

We know that to address the dual crises of biodiversity loss and climate change, we must rapidly transition to well-sited renewable energy generation. To meet our statewide renewable energy requirement of using 80 percent renewable generation by 2030, Maine must continue to build these generating resources. While often large, grid scale renewables are most cost-effective for off-site generation, rooftop solar, or generation that is co-located with load, has significant benefits and is very cost effective.<sup>2</sup>

Rooftop solar that is being used by those in the building can help both reduce grid congestion and lower costs for ratepayers. TNC supports efforts to adopt the IECC and asks that this committee vote **Ought to Pass on LD 741.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of solar preparedness work in Maine.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/energy/initiatives/renewable-energy/solar-distributed-generation>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/energy/sites/maine.gov/energy/files/2025-01/Maine%20Energy%20Plan%20January%202025.pdf>