

# Maine Climate Action **NOW!**

To: Maine Legislature Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology

From: Ezra Sassaman, Advocacy Coordinator, Maine Climate Action Now

Date: March 26, 2025

Re: LD 946 – Resolve, to Increase Access to Energy Efficiency Programs by Low-income and Moderate-income Residents

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology, my name is Ezra Sassaman. I live in Bar Harbor and represent Maine Climate Action Now! (MCAN), a coalition of fifteen grassroots nonprofit organizations from across Maine united by a desire to progress our state forward and undertake transformative action in response to the climate crisis.

Energy efficiency has an important role to play in Maine's future. We need to transition as quickly as possible away from fossil fuel energy that causes pollution, negative health effects, destruction of the environment through drilling, pipeline malfunctions, and over 150 spills requiring government attention per year in U.S. waters alone<sup>1</sup>.

Rapid electrification – as exemplified by Efficiency Maine's electric vehicle rebates, residential efficiency programs, and renewable energy incentives – is the clear way forward. The 2024 update of Maine's Climate Action Plan shows this program's continued success and sets an ambitious goal to rapidly expand low-income heat pump installations between now and 2030.<sup>2</sup>

The transition away from fossil fuels is highly important and we must all work together to make sure it is accomplished sooner rather than later. As it stands, however, the high upfront costs to low- and middle-income Mainers remains a barrier to this program's success – even when taking significant rebates into account. As reported earlier this year, 59% of Americans would not be able to afford a \$1,000 emergency expense, let alone a heat pump or electric vehicle.<sup>3</sup> That is why it is especially important to ensure Efficiency Maine is deliberate about providing resources to these communities.

For the reasons listed above, the MCAN coalition encourages you to vote ought-to-pass on LD 946. We're making good progress, but there is still work to do. Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> Office of Response and Restoration. "[Largest oil spills affecting U.S. waters since 1969](#)". NOAA. May 30, 2024. Accessed March 26, 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Maine Climate Council. "[Maine won't wait 2024 update](#)." *Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future*. November 2024. Accessed March 26, 2025, p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> Anne Marie Lee. "[Most Americans can't afford a \\$1,000 emergency expense, report finds](#)." *CBS News*. January 23, 2025. Accessed March 26, 2025.