

April 8, 2025

Senator Mark Lawrence, Chair and Representative Melanie Sachs, Chair

Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

c/o Legislative Information Office

100 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333

RE: Letter of Support for LD 1270 – An Act to Establish the Department of Energy Resources

Dear Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Committee,

My name is Richard Burbank, and I'm the founder and president of Evergreen Home Performance. I'm writing to express my support for LD 1270 to create a cabinet-level Department of Energy Resources in Maine.

This is both a personal and professional issue for me. I started Evergreen in 2006 after being laid off when MBNA left Rockland. At the time, I was living in an 1880s home with no insulation. Through a Department of Labor entrepreneurship program, I had the opportunity to launch a business focused on helping Mainers make their homes more comfortable and energy efficient. Nearly 20 years later, Evergreen employs 36 people and was recognized in 2024 as the top contractor recipient of Efficiency Maine's insulation rebates.

Evergreen got its start as one of the first participating contractors in the Maine Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® program, an initiative launched in 2006 and 2007 by the Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security. This office was a precursor of the current Energy Office. That early program helped launch a now-thriving industry that supports hundreds of quality jobs in Maine.

From the beginning, state energy leadership has been a vital partner to the growth of our company and our industry. I believe this bill will help ensure that leadership continues—stronger and more coordinated than ever before.

Maine's energy landscape today includes growing federal funding, ambitious climate goals, workforce challenges, and aging housing stock. These opportunities and challenges cross agency boundaries—and so must our response.

A cabinet-level Department of Energy Resources would bring additional strategic capacity and continuity to support and align the excellent work already being done by Efficiency Maine, MaineHousing, the Climate Council, and others. It would help coordinate policies and funding across sectors, improve alignment between state goals and program implementation, and provide a clear statewide voice in regional and federal energy conversations.

For businesses like mine, this continuity and clarity are key. When the state sets a goal—like weatherizing 35,000 homes and businesses by 2030—it's incredibly helpful to have clear, cumulative tracking toward that goal over time. While Efficiency Maine's annual reports provide valuable detail, a cabinet-level department can help provide big-picture context and visibility. With more staff capacity dedicated to data interpretation and policy coordination, the Department of Energy Resources can become a knowledgeable, expert partner to help us all succeed.

Over time, I believe the department will be able to deepen its understanding of the nuances of Maine's clean energy programs and policies, making it easier for businesses, agencies, and legislators to stay aligned and make well-informed decisions. That level of coordination will help ensure that Maine's energy investments continue to deliver for the public and for the private sector partners working hard to implement them.

I also want to express my support for the Clean Energy Partnership, which has created meaningful bridges between workforce development and employer needs. I'm pleased to see that this bill provides for the continuation of that important work. Strong coordination between workforce, employers, and state strategy will be critical to meeting Maine's climate and economic development goals—and this bill helps make that possible.

Just as Evergreen was born out of a forward-looking energy office nearly 20 years ago, I believe the Department of Energy Resources will support the next chapter of Maine's clean energy story. It will bring clarity, continuity, and coordination to a fast-moving and promising sector—benefiting homeowners, businesses, and communities across the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Richard Burbank

President and Founder, Evergreen Home Performance

Richard Burbank
Evergreen Home Performance LLC
LD 1270

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