

Testimony of Roberta Boczkiewicz in Opposition of

**LD 1321: An Act to reform Net Energy Billing by Establishing Limitations on the Programs' Duration and Compensation**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and honorable members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee. I am Roberta Boczkiewicz, Chair of the Castine Selectboard. Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to oppose LD 1321: An Act to reform net Energy billing by Establishing Limitations on the Programs' Duration and Compensation.

Net Energy Billing increases Equitable Access to all Maine residents and allows our citizens to make their own choices – the ultimate form of home rule. Community arrays help Mainers to adapt to Solar power without incurring debt. They help our neighbors who; cannot put solar panels on their homes due to incompatible roofing, lack the space for a private ground array, or cannot afford the cost of adding solar. This makes solar possible for all community members which levels the field and is better for everyone.

The town of Castine is currently planning to build a community solar array on our former landfill site. This would reduce the taxpayer burden on energy for municipal properties and allow several hundred homes to use the generated power without the expense of constructing their own arrays. This would be a cost decrease for our residents who are choosing to age in place and a win for our town by keeping those residents as a valuable part of our community.

Net Energy Billing projects help to decrease our dependence on imported fuels for power generation and provide a more stable cost to all: but especially our most vulnerable, community members. The projects save all ratepayers money by paying for grid updates, reducing demand, and lowering the state's dependence of expensive fossil fuels. Cutting programs that support Maine-owned distribution of energy will increase our dependence on and the cost of (natural gas) fuel sources that are subject to volatile price increases that endanger the stability of our most vulnerable community members and funnel money out of Maine.

Please do not advance this legislation, instead please defend the right of Mainers to have a choice of energy suppliers.

Sincerely,

Roberta Boczkiewicz

Castine Selectboard, Chair