

BROOKLIN CLIMATE RESPONSE COMMITTEE
Helping Brooklin, Maine Transition to Energy Efficiency and Climate Resilience

April 9, 2025

My name is Doug Hylan and I am chair of the Brooklin Climate Response Committee. I want to thank you for the chance to comment on this issue.

Last Summer our town was selected as one of five Maine communities to participate in a US Department of Energy program called Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project, or ETIPP. This program is designed to help coastal, remote, and island communities to advance local energy resilience goals. All these communities face a combined threat from sea level rise, increasingly severe storms, and poor utility reliability.

In this program, our committee works with scientists and planners from Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory to understand the specific needs of our community and find solutions tailored to local energy challenges. It will be several more months before this study is completed, but even at this stage, it is clear that photovoltaic arrays will be a critical part of keeping the lights on and the school open in Brooklin as we face increasingly severe weather.

One of our goals is to install a 130 kW solar array on the roof of our school to help power a microgrid that will allow our municipal buildings to serve residents during a prolonged utility outage. Another goal is to build a cooperative, locally owned solar farm on our closed dump brownfield site, designed to make the advantages of solar power available to working families in town. Both of these installations would need to be front-of-meter installations.

Our committee fully understands the desire to move away from the poorly named Community Solar business model which largely benefits out of state investors. But let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater! Projects like ours bring the full benefits of solar energy to working families and keep the savings in Maine.

A fair, stable net energy billing environment is what makes these kinds of projects workable. Net energy billing helps all ratepayers, especially when the ever-increasing cost of greenhouse gas pollution is taken into account. LD 1321, and others like it, are designed to slow the transition to a clean, lower cost, more equitable energy future for Maine. We ask you to please oppose them.

Thank you for your consideration,

Doug Hylan, Brooklin, ME